ESSAYS IN EXPOSITION

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PREFACE

The editors of this book realize that efficient teaching of the art of discourse consists in establishing habits of orderly and effective speaking and writing. All instruction in this art must be bent continuously toward fostering these habits — the product of patient practice. With this general principle in view the immediate aims of the present book may be indicated as follows:

1. A necessary preliminary to orderly speaking and writing is a knowledge of what constitutes order. But this knowledge should be as compact and categorical as feasible; otherwise the time that should be given to practice and to habit-making will be consumed in studying page after page of talk about talking, and writing about writing. An attempt has been made, therefore, to give briefly such an account of the categories of expository thought and thought relations as will enable the student completely to analyze a given section of exposition into its component parts and to show the interrelation of the parts. By understanding these relations the student acquires the desired knowledge of orderly construction, for always the understanding of the interrelation of the parts of a whole amounts to knowledge of construction. Not by learning general rules for order, but by analyzing and practicing the relations that constitute order, is proficiency in orderly thought to be won.

The editors believe that a severe and protracted drill in this sort of analysis is much needed by students at the present time. Our students do not know how to get another's thought exactly, how to restate it exactly, how to think with exactness themselves. Poor thought, intuitive and blundering thought, impressionistic assertion, vague conclusions from vaguer premises — these belong to the habits of thought of our students. They belong, also, to the habits of present-day thought in general.

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2. Whereas orderly construction and clearness are to be gained by a precise analytical knowledge of the kinds and relations of thoughts and by constant practice in their use, the color and emotional effects of discourse are attained through the more intuitive method of catching fire from noble ideas and great emotions. The preliminary account of style, therefore, as given in the second part of the Introduction, treats the emotional heart of discourse in a general and interpretative fashion.

3. But the categories of logical method and the variety of emotional appeal are realized also through noting the practice of others. The editors, therefore, have made a collection of representative essays, some of which are emphatic examples of logical method, others of emotional appeal and of a looser, more imaginative way of thinking, while still others unite both excellencies in a serene equality.

4. But one of the most spiritually constructive results of the study of form and color, of order and appeal, in discourse, is gained when in them as in a magic mirror we see great and significant characters. Too often this spiritual aspect of study is lost in the analysis of brief selections from a large number of authors. The present editors have tried to avoid this danger by representing four great and significant characters (Mill, Newman, Arnold, and Ruskin) by three essays each. From the intensive study of these authors the student may have the joy of realizing intimately their intellectual and emotional personalities. Then, too, he will be able to contrast these personalities with those he becomes acquainted with in a less complete manner in the rest of the book. Thus the student's own personality will be broadened in a definite and valuable way: he will attain a basis for the judgment of intellectual personality.

5. Finally, an attempt has been made so to select the essays that a few large subjects will appear and reappear as the student goes from essay to essay. Questions as to whether or not there is a science of history, as to the nature of progress, or the relation of art to science and to life — such large social questions as these

will be found to pervade the selections. It is hoped that the differing opinions expressed on these subjects will provoke discussion — one of the greatest aids to practice and to habit-making.

This book, then, is intended to supply both the methods of analysis and the materials for analysis that are needed as a basis for constant practice in speaking and writing in the first term of a Freshman college course in exposition.

A brief outline of such a course, as given at the University of California, will serve perhaps to suggest a proper way of using this book. The first term's work, running through fifteen weeks of three recitations each, provides intensive practice in analyzing the processes of thought, and in thinking, writing, and speaking with precision. The work is divided as follows:

A. Preliminary Analysis (five weeks).

1. Study of the principles of expository analysis, as laid down in the Introduction; committing to memory the main types of statements and relations between statements; study of the examples in the Introduction, and of other selected examples. (Three recitations.)

2. "Solution" of various paragraphs selected from different essays. The solution consists of analyzing the statements and their interrelation, and determining the "Logical Pattern" (see p. xxxiv) of each paragraph. (Six recitations.)

3. Solution of an essay. The solution consists of analyzing the logical interrelation of the divisions of an essay and giving the general logical pattern. (Three recitations.)

B. Practical Work (ten weeks).

Constant practice in speaking and writing, using various essays of the book as a basis for reports and discussions. At first extended attention is given to the preparation of oral solutions of each essay that is discussed; but gradually, as proficiency in finding the solutions increases, less time is needed for them, and a correspondingly longer time is given to discussions, prepared and extemporaneous. Throughout this exercise constant use is required of proper methods of construction — in other words, of the categories of method. The student is set to study the introductory essay on style, and is encouraged to express his own personality in all that he says and writes. Palmer's *Self Cultivation in English* is also put into his hands.

The second term's work is a continuation of that of the first. Longer and fewer selections are studied; longer oral and written reports are made. In this term practice very often becomes habit — the goal may be reached. The last five weeks of the term are devoted to a rapid survey of the principles of narration, considered as subjects for study and exposition.

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Pray remember pupils are not to be taught by rules which will always be a-slipping out of their memories. What you think necessary for them to do, settle in them by an indispensable practice as often as the occasion returns; and if it be possible, make occasions. This will beget habits in them, which, being once established, operate of themselves easily and naturally without the assistance of the memory.

JOHN LOCKE

INTRODUCTION

PRINCIPLES OF EXPOSITORY ANALYSIS

Need of a Body of Principles

Most students experience confusion when they attempt to state briefly and exactly the subject of the thought of a given page, or essay, of exposition. We are all familiar with this confusion. We know with what premonitions of disaster a student attacks his task. He reads the page or essay, gradually gathering as he proceeds a general and vague notion of what he is reading. Here and there certain phrases or sentences seem to stand out as most succinctly stating the subject or some important part of it: clues to the required subject they seem to be, at any rate. They are at once underlined, or a cross is placed opposite them in the margin. After the reading has been completed, there is a puzzled contemplation of the underlined clues. They cannot all be used. Finally, with uncertainty and desperation, the student lifts out those that appear to be the best and pieces them together with as little change as possible in the original wording. Is the result, he wonders, the required subject? What of the disregarded clues? What of all the sentences passed over with slight attention? What of the unpenetrated thoughts between the doubtful clues? Out of the mass of unrealized or but partly realized thought and thought relations the student has in confusion lifted a wobbly subject. A sad, and by no means a wiser Jack Horner, he has pulled out something or other from the hasty pudding that may be a plum, or may not be; and under the crust lies a mass of uncertain ingredients and possible plums.

What wonder that many a student comes to the conclusion that the few who fish with easy success in these pudding-essays have been endowed by nature with some special knack, — that the student who is successful in the study of English is the one who has a mysterious sense for divining plums?

In comparison, the task of the student of geometry is methodical and certain, because in attacking his problems he has ready to hand a set of axioms and theorems by the application of which he may test and measure and correct his various attempts at solution. With a little practice he soon learns to know when he has the proof. There is no vagueness about it. Nor is there a mass of disregarded, unpenetrated ideas that perhaps should have entered into the proof. Many ideas or hypotheses have been tested by definite methods; and where they have been kept, they have been kept because they are necessary, and those that were disregarded were unnecessary or not pertinent to the problem. The apparatus of axioms and theorems renders the task of the geometer exact and certain.

If the student of English had a fairly exact apparatus, he too might find method instead of confusion in his problems. Let us endeavor to discover such an apparatus, and to exemplify its use.

General Nature of the Apparatus

What, we may ask first, would be the general nature of such an apparatus? Such, obviously, as would enable us to determine exactly the nature of each unit of statement in a passage, including its relation to preceding and succeeding units of statement. By determining the relation, or lack of relation, among all the statements we should be able (*a*) to work back through subsidiary thoughts to the principal thought, *i.e.*, to the "subject"; and (*b*) to determine the exact nature of the relation of the mass of subsidiary thoughts to the main one, to see which of the thoughts are necessary and pertinent, to discover those

that had better be disregarded in making a summary or abstract of the given passage.

But what sort of apparatus would enable us thus to determine exactly the nature and relations of statements? The answer becomes clear: Some apparatus that would reduce all possible kinds and relations of statements to a few typical cases. Suppose, for example, that we could discover that there are six kinds of statements, and that all statements that are related, are related one to another in some one of seven ways: could we not then test the presence of a relation between any two statements and the nature of the connection, if present, by the successive application of each of the seven methods?

At first, to be sure, the task of applying these methods to all the statements of an essay appears excessive, practically impossible. But even a short practice in applying such tests to limited areas of writing might so train the mind to the immediate recognition of the presence of relations, and their kinds, that in practical reading large areas could be covered without detailed analysis. There would be no check to such discursive but trained reading until the thought relations became obscure. At that point the reader would at once pause, call his method into play, test in detail the statements of the doubtful area, determine the principal thoughts and their relation or lack of relation to the rest, and so come to a knowledge of the cause of his confusion at the given point, — whether, that is, the cause lay in the absence of methodical relations in the text, in the poor indication of such relations, or in his own failure to realize these relations.

Is there an apparatus of the sort indicated? Can we discover a few types that will cover all the possible kinds and relations of statements?

The discovery of such types amounts to classifying or dividing statements; and this may be done in a variety of ways, according as different principles of division are employed. On

the basis of grammatical form, statements may be classified as declaratory, interrogative, imperative, optative, and exclamatory. But this classification does not enlighten us as to the relations between statements, for we may determine the grammatical character of each sentence in a paragraph without learning anything of the thought relations between the sentences. For instance, an exclamatory sentence may follow a declaratory statement, and this in turn may be followed by an interrogation; but this sequence does not invariably involve a certain set of logical relations. In fact, all three sentences could be changed into any one grammatical form, or any combination of grammatical forms, without changing their logical meaning or their logical interrelation.

Another way of dividing statements is according to the quantity of their subjects; still another way is according to the kinds of relations expressed by their predicates. Both these methods are important for our purpose, because, as we shall show later, both lead to the discovery of kinds of relations between successive statements, and also because in some cases the subject of a statement logically is more emphatic than its predicate, while in other cases the reverse may be true.

We may proceed to define and exemplify both methods of division.

Kinds of Statements

A. as regards quantity

All statements may be divided according to the quantity of their subjects into Particular, General, and Indefinite statements. For the difference between logical and grammatical subjects, see below, p. xx, (*c*) under 2.

1. Particular Statement

(*a*) **A Particular Statement** is a statement in which something is predicated of one, or some, but not all the objects of a given class, or of a number of similar objects. Such a statement may

be reduced to this form: *Some X is Y*, of which the negative form would be, *Some X is not Y*.

A Particular Statement is the opposite of a General Statement, in which something is affirmed of all the members of a class (see below, 2). The greater number of the propositions met with in expository essays are indefinite or general, rather than particular.

Examples:

(1) A meteor has fallen. (Predication concerning one of a class.)
(2) Several meteors have fallen. (Predication concerning some, but not all, of a class.)
(3) Some monarchs are absolute.
(4) Many men are poor.
(5) "Few men know how little they know."
(6) "Almost all sages have extolled virtue."
(7) "Many are called, but few are chosen."
(8) Some men neither reverence nor fear the mystery of life.

(*b*) Particular statements occur in declarative, conditional, interrogative, imperative, optative, and exclamatory forms.

2. General Statement (Induction)

(*a*) **A General Statement** is a statement in which something is predicated of all the objects of a class, or of all of a number of similar objects. Such a statement may be reduced to this form: *All X is Y*, of which the negative form would be, *No X is Y*.

Examples:

(1) All men are mortal.
(2) "In all customary societies bigotry is the ruling principle" (*i.e.*, all customary societies have bigotry as a ruling principle).
(3) "All that is new comes from the prophets; all which is old is retained by the priests."

(*b*) A proposition concerning a single, specific object (such as "this book," "this principle," William Penn) is to be regarded as general in nature ("singular treated as universal," in the language of the logician; see W. S. Jevons, *Elementary Lessons in*

Logic, pp. 64–65. New ed., N. Y.: 1913), because each such object is an entire class by itself.

Examples:

(1) This is a wrong principle.
(2) This planet has been a home for gods.
(3) "Agamemnon made a fool of himself by his actions and words in the assembly, but in the Chryseis affair acted more as a dignified prince should."
(4) "The chief characteristic of the Middle Ages may be approximately — though only approximately — described as a return to the period of authoritative usage and as an abandonment of the classical habit of independent and self-choosing thought."

(*c*) A General Statement is, theoretically at least, a conclusion drawn from special cases. For example, "All men are mortal" is a general conclusion drawn from the observation of the mortality of a vast number of particular men. The process of drawing this conclusion, as well as the conclusion itself, is called **Induction**. (For the opposite process, *i.e.*, proceeding from the general to the particular, see below, p. xxiii, under Deduction.)

(*d*) If an induction is based upon a few cases only, but is nevertheless given the form of a general statement, a **Hasty Generalization** results.

Examples:

(1) All men are vain.
(2) All women who are not actually ugly think themselves beautiful.

(*e*) **A Logical Generalization** involves an induction of such completeness as to establish an approximately universal truth.

Examples:

(1) All men are mortal.
(2) "All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men."

(*f*) General statements occur in declarative, conditional, interrogative, imperative, optative, and exclamatory forms.

3. Indefinite Statement

(*a*) **An Indefinite Statement** is a statement in which there is no indication of the quantity of the subject, so that it is not certain whether the predicate is applicable to the whole of the subject or only a part of it.

Examples:

(1) "Poets falsify intentionally."
(2) "Speakers influence by character, not by speech."
(3) "People of the present and the last two or three generations have lost all practical sense of the primitive condition of humanity."
(4) "In practical matters, the burden of proof is supposed to be with those who are against liberty."
(5) "Science desires no isolation, but freely combines with every effort towards the bettering of man's estate."
(6) "To the civilized man it seems the merest truism to say that the business of Government is to make and execute laws, to see that crime is suppressed, and that its subjects are maintained in possession of their just rights."

(*b*) Some statements which are indefinite in form are clearly either particular or general in intention. Those that are general in intention may conveniently be called **Implied General Statements.**

Examples:

(1) Oranges come from Southern California (Particular, since it would be absurd to suppose that all oranges come from Southern California).
(2) Oranges come from warm latitudes (Implied General, since the evident meaning is that all oranges come from warm latitudes).
(3) Men have loved poetry in every age of the world (meaning *some men*).

For a more extensive list of such examples, see W. S. Jevons, *Studies in Deductive Logic* (3d ed. Lond.: 1896), Chap. III.

(*c*) Indefinite statements occur in declarative, conditional, interrogative, imperative, optative, and exclamatory forms.

Every simple sentence is Particular, General, or Indefinite as regards quantity. But complex sentences may involve clauses

of different quantities. The quantity of the principal clause or clauses of each sentence may, for our purpose, be taken as the quantity of the entire sentence.

B. AS REGARDS KINDS OF RELATIONS

Another way of dividing statements is according to the kind of relation expressed by the predicate.

1. If a statement merely affirms or denies some quality or attribute with reference to an object or idea, it may be called a statement of **Mere Predication.**

2. If a statement expresses a mere similarity or difference between objects or ideas, it may be called a statement of **Expressed Comparison** or **Contrast.**

3. If a statement expresses the fact that a given object or idea by its nature belongs to a given class or involves a given principle, it is called an **Example** or **Instance.**

4. If a statement expresses the fact that a given object or idea belongs to a certain class, and is distinguished by the possession of a certain attribute from other members of the same class, it is called a **Definition.**

5. If a statement expresses the following set of relations,

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{All } M \text{ is } P \\ &\underline{S \text{ is } M} \\ &\text{Therefore } S \text{ is } P, \end{aligned}$$

it is called a **Syllogism.**

6. If a statement expresses the fact that all the members of a given class may be grouped into subclasses according to a certain principle, it is called a statement of **Division.**

Such are the six types of statements according to kinds or relations. It need scarcely be remarked that every example of any one of these six kinds will, if we consider the first basis of division, be either Particular, General, or Indefinite with relation to the quantity of its subject.

We proceed to a more careful definition and explanation of these six types.

1. Mere Predication

(*a*) If a statement merely expresses some attribute or quality of an object or idea, without indicating formal comparison or contrast, exemplification, definition, reason, or division, it may be called a statement of **Mere Predication.**

Examples:

(1) Birds fly.

(2) Man is mortal.

(3) "In history as it is generally written, there are to be seen only great personages and events."

(4) "Certainly the old Roman traditions were destined to be overwhelmed by the invasion of Oriental ideas and habits."

(5) "Incompatible beliefs or practices propagated from different points in time or space eventually come into conflict with each other."

2. Expressed Comparison or Contrast

(*a*) By the term **Expressed Comparison** or **Contrast** is meant a statement in which a formal comparison or contrast is formally made with the aid of some word or phrase that indicates similarity or difference.

Example:

"The normal number of the ribs in the orang and some gibbons is twelve pairs, as in man, while in the chimpanzee and gorilla there are thirteen pairs."

(*b*) When the comparison shows a partial or superficial similarity between two things that are different in their nature, a **Simile** is formed.

Example:

The meeting of the two armies was like the collision of storm-clouds.

Often, for the sake of brevity and vividness, the Simile is contracted into a **Metaphor** by the omission of the word or phrase of formal comparison.

Example:

"The human body is the house we live in."

(*c*) Let the student classify according to quantity of subject all the examples given under this, the previous, and the next four heads. In doing this he will soon learn that the logical subject, with which he is concerned, is often different from the grammatical subject. For instance, in the example under (*a*) above, *number* is the grammatical subject, but *orang and some gibbons* is the logical subject. Logically the sentence may be paraphrased thus: All orangs and some gibbons normally have twelve pairs of ribs, as has man, etc. When the sentence is reduced to this form, it is evident that it is General with reference to *all orangs* and Particular with reference to *some gibbons*. A similar observation may be made of the second clause in the sentence. The first example under (*b*) is to be classified as a Singular-General, since a single, specific meeting forms the subject (see above, p. xv, (*b*) under 2). The second example under (*b*) is indefinite in form, but is clearly intended as a General, referring to all human bodies: All human bodies are like the houses we live in.

3. Exemplification and Instances

(*a*) By **Exemplification** is meant a statement that assigns a particular case to a principle, a species to its class, or an individual to its species.

Examples:

(1) See all statements cited above and below under the head "Examples."

(2) "Some races of men at our earliest knowledge of them have already acquired the basis of a free constitution. . . . The Greeks were one of these races." (The second sentence gives an example of the Particular Statement contained in the first sentence.)

(3) "There are periods when great ideas are 'in the air,' and when, from some cause or other, even common persons seem to partake of an unusual elevation. The age of Elizabeth in England was conspicuously such a

time." [The first sentence is a General Statement (= periods of a specific sort exist" — singular as universal); the second assigns an example.]

(4) Man is a mammal. [A General Statement (= "all men are mammals"), which is also a statement of exemplification, inasmuch as it assigns a species to its class.]

(5) George Washington was a man. [A General Statement (singular as universal), which is also a statement of exemplification, inasmuch as it assigns an individual to his species.]

(*b*) An example that gives a concrete case in which a certain principle or law is evident is often called an **Instance** or **Particular Instance.**

Examples:

(1) "An action may require all our attention and all our volition for its first, or second, or third performance, but by frequent repetition it becomes, in a manner, part of our organization, and is performed without volition, or even consciousness.

"As everyone knows, it takes a soldier a very long time to learn his drill — to put himself, for instance, into the attitude of 'attention' at the instant the word of command is heard. But after a time, the sound of the word gives rise to the act, whether the soldier be thinking of it or not. There is a story, which is credible enough, though it may not be true, of a practical joker, who, seeing a discharged veteran carrying home his dinner, suddenly called out 'Attention!' whereupon the man instantly brought his hands down, and lost his mutton and potatoes in the gutter." (The first paragraph cites a general principle; the first two sentences of the second paragraph supply an instance, stated in a generalized fashion (a soldier = all soldiers), and the following sentence supplies a particular instance. The two instances tend to prove the truth of the principle.)

(*c*) It is worth while noting that, as in the last example, an example or instance may be stated in several sentences; and that under examples or instances of a general nature more particular examples or instances may be subsumed.

4. Definition

(*a*) **Definition,** broadly speaking, signifies distinguishing a thing or idea from similar things or ideas.

(*b*) **Logical Definition,** or definition proper, consists in assign-

ing an object [1] to the genus immediately above it, and also in giving those characteristics of the object that sufficiently distinguish it from other objects in the same genus. These distinguishing characteristics are called the *differentiæ* (singular, *differentia*) of the object.

A complete definition, therefore, is made up of object, genus, and differentia or differentiæ.

Example:

A circle is a plane figure bounded by a line every point of which is equally distant from a point within called the center.

(*c*) **Literary Definition** is a loose form of definition in which the genus may be implied rather than stated, while particular parts, traits, aspects, or characteristics of the object, used in a descriptive way, for purposes of rough identification, take the place of true differentiæ. Often, therefore, literary definition amounts to little else than an **Enumeration of Particulars**, or **Particularizing**, with reference to a general object or idea. Such **Particularizing** is often introduced by the adverb *namely* (*viz.*); sometimes by *indeed* (when not concessive), *in truth*, *specifically*, etc.[2]

Examples:

(1) "Culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances."

(2) "By conservatism is meant that preference for and indulgence to what is already established, that faith in what has been tried, and that distrust of what exists only in speculation, which never wholly forsakes every sound politician, of whatever party." (See Genung's *Rhetoric*, p. 560.)

[1] The term "object" should be understood to include ideas as well as objective phenomena.

[2] Genetic Definition, so called, is not concerned with giving genus and differentia, but with explaining the nature of an object by giving its causes and describing how it develops or is made. A genetic definition of syndicalism, for instance, would deal with the causes leading to its conception and with the stages of growth by which it has reached its present state.

(3) "This is what I mean by the fruits of study, namely, the intellectual and spiritual by-products of persistent effort in getting to know."

5. Syllogism (Deductive Inference)

(*a*) By **Deductive Inference** is meant reasoning from the general to the particular. Typically considered, this kind of reasoning proceeds according to a pattern called the **Syllogism.**

(*b*) The **Logical Syllogism** may be defined as a logical formula made up of three members: the **Major Premise**, the **Minor Premise**, and the **Conclusion.** The **Major Premise** should be a true generalization, consisting of a universal notion and its predicate, such as, "All men are mortal." The **Minor Premise** really supplies an example, or special case, of the notion, such as, "Caesar is a man." By inference, what is predicated of the general notion is true of the special case; and the statement to this effect, *viz.*, "Caesar is mortal," is the **Conclusion.**

Diagram:

Let M equal the general notion, or Middle Term, as the logicians call it; let P equal the predicate of the general notion; let S equal the subject of the conclusion, or, what is the same thing, the individual case that falls under the notion. Then,

$$\begin{array}{l} M \text{ is } P \\ \underline{S \text{ is } M} \\ S \text{ is } P \end{array}$$

The Syllogism has many forms; but for our purposes all deductive inferences may roughly be reduced to the above form.

(*c*) The **Literary Syllogism**, or **Enthymeme**, is a syllogism abbreviated by the omission of one of its premises. The omitted premise is only implied, and often, therefore, is of a vague and imperfect kind. The ingenuity of the student is not seldom sorely taxed to supply the missing premise; but he is often rewarded for his pains by discovering that the hidden premise involves an error that vitiates the entire reasoning of a given passage or contention.

Examples:

(1) Cæsar will die, because he is a man. (The major premise, "All men die, *i.e.*, are mortal," is implied.)

(2) Cæsar will die, because all men are mortal. (The minor premise, "Cæsar is a man," is omitted.)

(3) I do not complain of the popular attitude toward woman suffrage, because it is useless to complain of popular feelings. (The minor premise, "The popular attitude toward woman suffrage is one case of popular feeling," is omitted.)

(4) I do not complain of the popular attitude toward woman suffrage, because it is a case of popular feeling. (The major premise, "It is always useless to complain of popular feelings," is omitted.)

(*d*) The inference, or "reason why," is often conveyed loosely and somewhat descriptively in a series of sentences.

Example:

"Many a man has looked back on his years of early struggle with thanksgiving. The reason is not far to seek. The struggle of those years taught him self-reliance, initiative, daring, and endurance. It produced in him the qualities of achievement, the stuff of success. The making of what he became, he perceived to have been in those hard experiences; and in this realization he found good reason for thanksgiving." (R. W. Neal, *Thought-Building in Composition*, N. Y.: 1912, p. 83.)

This passage may be reduced to formal order thus: Some men look back with thanksgiving on their early years of struggle (= Particular Statement, conclusion of the syllogism), because they realize that those experiences made them what they are (= minor premise), *viz.*, men of self-reliance, initiative, daring, and endurance (= Definition by Enumeration of particular traits); and these traits are the qualities of achievement, the stuff of success (= Definition).

(*e*) **A Chain of Reasoning** is formed when the conclusion of one syllogism or enthymeme is taken as one of the premises of a second, the conclusion of the second taken as one of the premises of a third, and so on until a final conclusion is reached.

Example:

You will not learn, because you refuse to study; you will not pass your examinations, because you will not learn; and you will be dropped from college, because you will not pass your examinations.

(*f*) **A Concessive Statement** may imply the negation of a deductive inference. Thus, in the sentence, "Although I am old, yet I jump and dance," a negation of the following syllogism is implied: No old people jump and dance; I am an old person; therefore, I do not jump and dance.

Examples:

(1) Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.

(2) "England calls herself a Christian nation, yet she not only tolerates, but even encourages to the best of her ability that nefarious and most un-Christian of present trades, the opium traffic with China."

(*g*) **A Conditional Statement** may always be considered as a major premise that is complex in form.

Examples:

(1) If snow falls, the air is cold.
The snow falls.
Hence, the air is cold.

(2) "Government by discussion, if it can be borne, at once breaks down the yoke of fixed custom."
It can be borne in some cases.
Hence, in some cases it at once breaks down the yoke of fixed custom.

(*h*) Reasoning by **Analogy** depends upon a hidden major premise to the effect that things which are alike in many respects are probably alike in other respects.

Example:

"The earth and Mars are both planets, nearly equidistant from the sun, not differing greatly in density, having similar distributions of seas and continents, alike in conditions of humidity, temperature, seasons, day and night, etc.; but the earth supports organic life; hence Mars (probably) supports organic life."

6. Division

(*a*) **Division**, in general, is the "enumeration and naming of the parts of a whole."

(*b*) **Literary Partition**, or **Enumeration**, is the separation of an idea into "heads," "so as to help the reader's memory and realizing power in retaining it." "Convenience and pointedness," rather than "exhaustive classification," are its objects. The real purpose of such "dividing into heads" is as much that of definition as it is that of division (see above, **Enumeration of Particulars**, (*c*) under 4).

(*c*) **Logical Division** consists in regarding an object as a class, and in determining the species that fall under it. Obviously the species must be differentiated one from another; hence, definition is involved in division.

Rules for Logical Division:

(1) There must be but one principle of division, and it must be a "literal character, that is, not based on figure or fancy, and essential, that is, not put on arbitrarily without regard to the object's nature."

(2) The members of the division, *i.e.*, the species, should be mutually exclusive.

(3) The division must be exhaustive.

Logical division is seldom to be met with outside scientific and philosophical works. For a full explanation of its nature and rules, see Genung's *Working Principles of Rhetoric*, Ginn & Co.: 1900, pp. 568–575.

So far, we have considered two classifications of statements, one with reference to the quantity of the logical subject, the other with reference to the kind of relation expressed by the predicate. From these classifications it follows that every statement must belong to one class or type according to the quantity of its subject, and to another class according to the nature of its predicate.

But in actual analysis only the more important type need be considered. In such a statement, for instance, as "Everything that is commonly called poetry in the modern tongues may in some way or other trace its pedigree back to William of Poitiers,"

the emphasis is clearly upon the idea as a General Statement, not as a Mere Predication. Thus the subject type is the emphatic type of this sentence, and it is quite unnecessary to give its predicate type. Similarly, it is scarcely ever necessary to give the subject type of a statement when the quality of the predicate is more important than the quantity of the subject. This greatly reduces the labor of analysis.

Which of the two types is the more important in a given statement is to be determined by the intention of the author as revealed by the context, the emphasis of the statement, and the use of conjunctions that belong to given types. For example, the statement "Women are suspicious one of another" is both an Implied General Statement and a Mere Predication; but if the original context of such a statement is studied, it will become clear whether the author intended merely to express a quality of women or to emphasize the fact that *all* women are suspicious. Or the emphasis might be contained in the sentence itself, as: "All women, from youth to decrepitude, in all conditions of society and in all climates of the planet, are suspicious one of another." On the other hand, by the use of a conjunction the force of the statement might be changed to that of an example: "All women, for instance, are suspicious one of another." In such ways, then, may the student determine which of the two types of a given sentence is the more important.

Grammatical Forms

All the above kinds of statements, like the quantitative statements, may be thrown into various grammatical forms. Thus, any statement may be thrown into the form of an interrogation, or an exclamation. The denial of a probable inference may be put in a concessive form (see above, (*f*) under 5); indeed, a concessive clause always "*admits* (or concedes) some fact or supposition *in spite of which* the assertion in the main clause is made" (see Kittredge and Farley, *An Advanced English*

Grammar, Ginn & Co., §§ 399–402). Again, any statement concerning the truth of which there is doubt, may be thrown into the conditional form. For instance, the statement, "This ore is valuable because it is gold," is thrown into the conditional form, "If this ore is gold, it is valuable," if the nature of the ore is in doubt. In short, the logical forms may be thrown into declarative, conditional, interrogative, imperative, optative, and exclamatory forms, — in some cases with greater ease, in other cases with less; but a conditional sentence always, as in the example just cited, has an inferential coloring or implication.

SUMMARY OF THE KINDS OF STATEMENTS

A. Divided according to quantity of logical subject

1. Particular Statement
2. General Statement (Induction)
   - General Statement
   - Singular as Universal
   - Induction as method of ascertaining a General Statement
   - Hasty Generalization
   - Logical Generalization
3. Indefinite Statement
   - Indefinite Statement
   - Indefinite in form, but particular or general in intention:
     - Implied General.

B. Divided according to kind of relation expressed by the predicate

1. Mere Predication
2. Expressed Comparison or Contrast
   - Simile and Metaphor
3. Exemplification and Instances
4. Definition
   - Logical Definition
   - Literary Definition, Enumeration of Particulars, or Particularizing
5. Deductive Inference
   - Logical Syllogism
   - Literary Syllogism, or Enthymeme
   - Chain of Reasoning
   - Concessive Statements that imply the negation of an inference
   - Conditional Statements
   - Reasoning by Analogy

6. Division
   Literary Partition, or Enumeration of Heads
   Logical Division

C. Variety of grammatical forms into which statements may be thrown
1. Declarative
2. Interrogative
3. Imperative
4. Optative
5. Exclamatory
6. Conditional and Concessive (*cf.* Deductive Inference), etc.

Relations between Statements

By thus noting the various kinds of statements, we have taken the first step toward acquiring the apparatus needed for a complete analysis of a page of exposition. But such an analysis must be able to show not only the kinds of statements, but also the relations between successive statements.

The relations between statements correspond to the types of statement, to both subject and predicate types.[1] Only the predominant type of a statement — subject or predicate — is considered in determining the relation between two statements. These relations may be summarized as follows:

(1) **Particularization.** A statement or series of statements may express parts or attributes of an idea or object. They are said to be related to the original statement of the idea or object by Particularization.

In general, Particularization is employed for the purpose of roughly identifying or defining an object or idea. Hence, Particularizing is generally regarded as Literary Definition (see above, p. xxii, (*c*) under 4).

Not seldom, however, the particularizing relation is very

[1] There are no types of relations corresponding to the Indefinite Statement and the Mere Predication, because an Indefinite Statement in reference to another statement always either particularizes or generalizes, and because a Mere Predication does not refer back or forward. Hence there are only seven, instead of nine, sorts of relations between statements.

loose, depending merely upon some weak, far-fetched, and unexpressed association by similarity or contiguity. In such cases there is a lack of Coherence (see below, p. xxxii).

Examples:

(1) "An honest man is an asset of any society to which he may belong. He is God's best work." The first statement is an Indefinite Statement of general intention (All honest men are assets, etc.); the second is of the same kind, but the only relation between the two statements is an identity of grammatical subject: the second does not carry forward or support the first statement, unless indeed, which is improbable, the writer could have meant, "An honest man is an asset to any society to which he may belong, because he is God's best work." What *did* probably occur in the writer's mind was that the first statement by some weak association of similarity suggested the second.

(2) "Women should vote because they are taxed. They are more honest in paying taxes than men are."

(2) **Generalization (Induction).** A statement may generalize a previous statement or some part of a previous statement. The relation between the two statements is one of Generalization.

The process of Generalization, as already explained, is called Induction. Often a series of statements expounds the relations which by induction are finally summarized in a General Statement.

When the relation of Generalization is very weak, being concerned with generalizing an unimportant idea in a previous statement, and thus confusing and obscuring the more important idea, a lack of Coherence results (see below, p. xxxii).

(3) **Comparison** and **Contrast.** A statement may introduce a Comparison or Contrast bearing upon a preceding statement.

(4) **Exemplification.** An example is related by Exemplification to the statement that gives the general idea or class under which the example falls.

(5) **Definition.** A statement that defines an idea or object is related by definition to a preceding statement that introduces the idea or object.

(6) **Inference by Deduction.** Deduction in itself relates the two or three statements that it embraces in its inference.

(7) **Division.** A statement of Division may divide a subject mentioned in a previous statement, or enumerate its sub-topics. The relation between the two statements may then be said to be one of Division.[1]

For examples of all these relations, see the analysis of paragraphs that follows (pp. xxxiii ff.).

The nature of the relation between successive statements is often indicated by a word or phrase chosen for this very purpose. Such words may be conjunctions or adverbs; such phrases may be conjunctional or adverbial phrases.

Examples:

Particularization: indeed, in fact (when these are not concessive in force).
Generalization: in general, as a whole, etc.
Expressed Comparison: like, as, similarly.
Expressed Contrast: but, on the contrary, however.
Exemplification: for example, for instance.
Definition or Particularization: *viz.*, to wit, *i.e.*
Deduction: because, hence, therefore, for, since, whereas; if, although (in conditional and concessive clauses).
Division: first, second, etc.

Often, however, connecting words and phrases are omitted between successive statements, and the connection is implied only. The implied connection must then be determined by judging of the possible connection between the two statements. The implied connection must, of course, be one of the seven kinds of relations just summarized; but sometimes more than one relation can be supplied. Choice should then be made of the one best suited to the meaning of the context. For examples, see the analysis of paragraphs that follows (pp. xxxiii ff.).

[1] **Iteration** and **Obverse Iteration** involve a certain identity of statements. They repeat statements, directly, or by denying the contrary. As such they are methods, primarily, of Emphasis (see below, p. xxxii). In the analysis of statements, therefore, Iteration should be noted as a method of emphasis, rather than as a method of advancing thought relations.

Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis

The analysis of the statements in a properly constructed paragraph, by making clear the interrelation of the statements, discloses the principal statement, or subject of the paragraph, as distinguished from subordinate statements.

If in any paragraph it is found upon analysis that all the statements do not lead directly or through others to one principal statement, the paragraph is said to lack **Unity**. Now, the types most susceptible to loose connection are Mere Predications, particular or general, since they *refer back* less than do the other types. It follows, therefore, that there is a presumption against the unity of a paragraph that is largely made up of Mere Predications, particular or general; and that, *vice versa*, there is a presumption of unity in favor of a paragraph that is made up for the greater part of the other types of statement.

If in any paragraph it is found upon analysis that logical interrelations of the statements cannot be discovered, or are very obscure, the paragraph is said to lack **Coherence**. Conversely, Coherence is present when these typical interrelations are realized. And since the obvious sign of such realization is the use of connecting terms (such as, *like, but, in general, for example, that is, hence, because, for, although, yet, first, second*, etc.), it follows that there is a presumption against the coherence of a paragraph in which there are very few or no such terms; and that, *vice versa*, there is a presumption of coherence in favor of a paragraph in which there are many such terms.

If in any paragraph it is found upon analysis that some one statement or group of statements is, by its position at the beginning or at the end of the paragraph, or by its fullness, or by the special force of its diction, or by its iteration, intentionally made more conspicuous or more easy to remember than the other statements in its company, the paragraph is said to have **Emphasis**. Emphasis, if skilfully effected, enforces the Unity of a paragraph and assists its Coherence.

Iteration and Obverse Iteration

(*a*) **Iteration** is the repetition, usually for rhetorical Emphasis, or clearness, of a statement in the same or different words; but inasmuch as the repetition of exactly the same words is seldom to be met with, iteration may for practical purposes be defined as repetition in different words. The use of different words, however, almost always produces some difference, or at least extension, of meaning; and this difference or extension will in kind be some one of the kinds of statements summarized in this apparatus.

Example:

"We cannot believe a proposition only by wishing . . . to believe it. The most violent inclination to find a set of propositions true, will not

enable the weakest of mankind to believe them without a vestige of intellectual grounds, without any even apparent evidence" (cited by Bain).— The second sentence iterates the idea of the first, with an element of contrast in the superlatives, and particularization (definition) of the term *only* in the two phrases introduced by *without*.

(*b*) A specific method of repetition in other words is that of giving a **synonym**. There is a defining power, as well as a rhetorical energy, in the synonym.

(*c*) **Obverse iteration** is the denial of the counterstatement.

Example:

This room is dark (Singular as Universal); it is not light (Obverse iteration).

Application of the Apparatus

A. To the Analysis of Paragraphs

We have now completed the account of the types of statements and of the relations between statements. With these as an apparatus a systematic and exhaustive analysis may be made of the thought of a given paragraph or essay of exposition. The task of expository analysis becomes as exact as in its nature it can be.

It remains to show how this apparatus is to be applied; and first may be considered its application to the paragraph.

1. Example of a Paragraph in Which the Types and Interrelations are Clearly Indicated

First, let a paragraph be set off in **Units of Statement**, that is, let each part that makes a complete thought, whether that part is a sentence or a section of a sentence, be considered as a unit. In the following paragraph the units are numbered for convenience of reference.

" [1] In English it will usually be found that the so-called learned words are of foreign origin. [2] Most of them are derived from French or Latin, and a considerable number from Greek. [3] The reason is obvious. [4] The development of English literature has not been isolated, but has taken place in close connection with the earnest study of foreign literatures. [5] Thus, in the fourteenth century, when our language was assuming substantially the shape

which it now bears, the literary exponent of English life and thought, Geoffrey Chaucer, the first of our great poets, was profoundly influenced by Latin literature as well as by that of France and Italy. [6] In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Greek and Latin classics were vigorously studied by almost every English writer of any consequence. . . . . ."

Second, let the type of each of the thought units, and the nature of their interrelations, be determined as follows:

(1) Mere Predication (also a Particular Statement, since the meaning is, Some (not all, but almost all) of our learned words are of foreign origin).

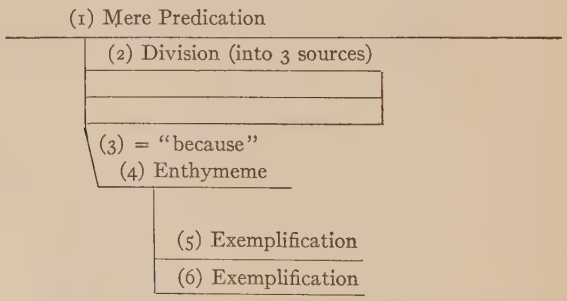
(2) Division of the principal notion in the first unit.

(3) Mere Predication (also Singular (*The* reason) as universal, and so General Statement); but equivalent to a *because* connecting (2) and (4).

(4) Mere Predication (also Implied General, since the term *development* implies *all* the development of English Literature). But this unit is really introduced by (3), as already stated, and so forms with (2) an Enthymeme.

(5) and (6) Examples supporting (4).

The results of the analysis may be represented thus:



Since the topic of the paragraph, the Mere Predication in the first unit, is developed by inference and exemplification, the **Logical Pattern** of the paragraph may be said to be *Mere Predication supported by Inference* (*Enthymeme*) *and Exemplification.* Since all the units refer back directly or through other statements to one topic, there is no lack of **Unity**; and the canon of **Coherence** is satisfied by the clear indication of logical relations between the successive statements.

2. Example of a Paragraph in which the Interrelations of the Units are Implied, not Indicated

"[1] But a government by discussion, if it can be borne, at once breaks down the yoke of fixed custom. [2] The idea of the two is inconsistent. [3] As far as it goes, the mere putting up of a subject to discussion, with the object of being guided by that discussion, is a clear admission that that subject is in no degree settled by established rule, [3a] and that men are free to choose in it. [4] It is an admission too that there is no sacred authority — [4a] no one transcendent and divinely appointed man whom in that matter the community is bound to obey. [5] And if a single subject or group of subjects be once admitted to discussion, ere long the habit of discussion comes to be established, the sacred charm of use and wont to be dissolved. [6] 'Democracy,' it has been said in modern times, 'is like the grave; it takes, but it does not give.' [7] The same is true of 'discussion.' [8] Once effectually submit a subject to that ordeal, and you can never withdraw it again; [8a] you can never again clothe it with mystery, or fence it by consecration; [8b] it remains for ever open to free choice, and exposed to profane deliberation."

(1) Inference, in conditional form (also Implied General Statement, since the meaning is that all government by discussion, if it can be borne, breaks down the yoke of fixed custom).

(2) The sentence by itself is a Mere Predication: but the absence of an introductory phrase of relation makes it necessary for us to supply the connection between this and the previous sentence. What connection the author intended is not clear. He may have felt this statement as an iteration of the first. Possibly an inference is implied: All government by discussion breaks down the yoke of fixed custom *because* the idea of the two is inconsistent. We have, then, an Enthymeme, — a syllogism with the major premise omitted. But an attempt to supply the major premise ("whenever two forms of control within a society are based upon inconsistent ideas, one breaks down the other") reveals a weakness in the Enthymeme, since the major premise does not indicate which of the two ideas or methods of control will dominate the other. So far as the hidden premise is concerned, fixed custom might just as well break down government by discussion. This vagueness, or weakness, in the thought is mended in the next unit.

(3) Mere Predication, if we take the sentence independently, as it stands. But the absence of a connecting phrase leads us to hunt for an implied relation between this and the previous thought. Does the author mean to say that the idea of the two is inconsistent *because* the mere invoking of discussion is an admission that custom is not final; or does he mean to say that government by discussion breaks down custom *because* the mere invoking of discussion is an admission that custom is not final? One cannot definitely say which the author means, since both meanings are possible;

but the connection seems closer if we adopt the second interpretation. The third unit is then seen to form an Enthymeme with the first unit. The final clause in this sentence, "and that men are free to choose in it," involves another Enthymeme, or rather *implies* another Enthymeme, thus: Government by discussion breaks down custom *because* the invoking of discussion implies that men are free to choose their method of acting. This Enthymeme may be numbered (3^a), since it is so closely joined with the first part of the sentence.

(4) The repetition of the word *admission*, joined with the adverb *too*, at once acts as a connecting phrase and suggests that this unit is similar in type and relation to the previous unit, *i.e.*, that it forms an Enthymeme with the first unit: "because the invoking of discussion is an admission that there is no sacred authority" (the balance of the sentence (4*a*) contains, by the way, a definition of "sacred authority").

(5) The conjunction *and* does not necessarily mean that this unit is coördinate in type and relation with the previous unit, but so it appears to be, — that is, it forms an Enthymeme with the first unit, as can be seen by joining the first and fifth units by *because*. This unit, moreover, may be resolved into a chain of two syllogisms: "*because* the *habit* of discussion is thus established, and *because* the establishment of a *habit* of discussion destroys custom." Note, too, that the idea "involving discussion" is in this unit expressed in conditional form: "if a single subject," etc.

(6) and (7) Taken together these constitute an Expressed Comparison. The connection with the previous thought is not plain until we reach the last word of (7), *viz.*, *discussion*. Then we realize that the previous idea *government by discussion* is being elaborated by a comparison.

(8) Contains the application of the comparison, which might be introduced either by a *viz.* (then the type and relation would be Literary Definition), or by a *because* (Enthymeme).

(8*a*) and (8*b*) are similar to (8): the three might be expressed thus: "because you can never withdraw it; because you can never again make it into custom; because it will always remain open to free discussion."

It is evident that throughout this paragraph the task of analysis is rendered more difficult by the omission of connecting words, the leaving of the connections to the implication of the context. The results of our analysis might be graphically represented as follows:

(1) Inference, in conditional form

(2) Enthymeme | (3) Enthymeme | (3*a*) | (4) | (5) | (6) Comparison | (8) | (8*a*) | (8*b*)

The analysis of the paragraph shows that the general **Logical Pattern** is *Conditional Inference supported by Enthymeme and Comparison;* that the topic is adequately stated in the opening sentence; and that there is no adverse criticism of the unity of the paragraph, since the successive units are logically related in due order to one another and the main topic. The omission of connectives, however, tends to obscure the coherence.

3. Example of a Paragraph with Concessive Elements

" [1] Discussion, too, has incentives to progress peculiar to itself. [2] It gives a premium to intelligence. [3] To set out the arguments required to determine political action with such force and effect that they really should determine it, is a high and great exertion of intellect. [4] Of course, all such arguments are produced under conditions; [5] the argument abstractedly best is not necessarily the winning argument. [6] Political discussion must move those who have to act; [7] it must be framed in the ideas, and be consonant with the precedent, of its time, just as it must speak its language. [8] But within these marked conditions good discussion is better than bad; [9] no people can bear a government of discussion for a day, which does not, within the boundaries of its prejudices and its ideas, prefer good reasoning to bad reasoning, sound argument to unsound. [10] A prize for argumentative mind is given in free states, to which no other states have anything to compare."

(1) Mere Predication (also Implied General Statement (= *all* discussion, etc.))

(2) Connection wanting. Supply *viz.*, and then the unit involves a first step in the Enumeration of Particulars, *i.e.*, of the actual incentives to progress. Hence the type and relation are Literary Definition.

(3) Connection wanting. Supply a *because* between this and the previous unit. It will then be seen that (3) and (2) form an Enthymeme.

(4) (8) (9) The fourth unit is introduced by the concessive phrase *of course*, and it involves the negation of an Implied Inference, the eighth and ninth units completing or supporting the negation. The thought may be expanded as follows: All arguments which are calculated to win the popular ear lack high and great intellect (Major Premise); political discussion must be calculated to win the popular ear (Minor Premise): therefore political discussion does not involve high and great intellect (Conclusion, Implied). But it *does* involve high intellect (Implied Negation of the Implied Conclusion), *because* (8), " within those conditions (*i.e.*, need of winning the popular ear) good discussion (*i.e.*, discussion involving high intellect) is better than bad"; *because* (9) "no people can bear a government of discussion," etc. (Enthymemes).

(5) Supply *viz.;* particularizes (4); hence, Literary Definition.

(6) Supply *because;* Enthymeme with (5).

(7) Supply *because;* Enthymeme with (5). Or supply *i.e.*, and consider (7) as particularizing (6); hence Literary Definition. Either solution is possible. The second method is probably the better, since it gives a better developed idea.

(8), (9) See above, under (4).

(10) Iteration of the second unit.

Logical Pattern: Inference, with negation of an implied contrary conclusion, in concessive form. Topic: "Discussion is an incentive to progress because it places a premium on intelligence, even if political discussion must be qualified to move the popular will." The Coherence is admirable, though somewhat hidden by lack of connectives.

4. Example of a Paragraph made up of Exemplification and Inference

For such an example, see the second paragraph on page 279 of this book. In that paragraph the first sentence is a Mere Predication (also a General Statement). The second is an Iteration of the first, with expressed Contrast added. The third sentence, made up of two units, supplies an Example, and by Enthymeme proves that the Example does exemplify the statement in the second sentence. The rest of the paragraph is taken up with further Enthymemes to the same purpose, and with other Examples arranged to fit the Contrast first enunciated.

Often an Example or Instance is presented at length, descriptively or narratively. In such cases the greater part of the paragraph may be taken up with the one Example (see the opening paragraph of the selection from Bagehot, page 453).

5. Example of a Paragraph made up mostly of Definition

For such an example, see the first paragraph beginning on page four of this book.

From these examples of the application of the apparatus to the analysis of paragraphs it becomes evident that, when the analysis of a paragraph is completed, the predominance of some one method of logical development constitutes a definite **Logical Pattern**. The discovery of the logical pattern of a paragraph may well constitute the aim of paragraph analysis. In other

words, the discovery of the logical pattern of a paragraph may be regarded as the solution of a typical problem in expository analysis. By engaging in such solutions the student will rapidly perfect his sense of form and precision, and acquire a mastery of these most desirable intellectual qualities.

B. TO THE ANALYSIS OF ESSAYS

In applying the apparatus to the analysis of essays as wholes, the student deals with larger units. His units are no longer the thought units within the paragraph, but the various principal and subordinate divisions or topics into which the essay falls. Each of these, when reduced to a proposition, must fall under one of the types of statements; and the interrelation of topics may be determined, therefore, in the same way in which the interrelation of the thought units of a paragraph is determined. In other words, the apparatus is to be applied exactly as before, but to larger masses.

Ultimately, of course, the determination of a topic of a given division rests upon the determination of the thought of each paragraph and the interrelation of the paragraph topics; only so can the various division topics be ascertained. But in practical reading, as already indicated,[1] the reader who has had some training in applying the apparatus to smaller areas of writing, is able to cover rapidly large areas, noting as he reads the general logical character of the successive topics as they are introduced. Thus he keeps aware of the interrelation of the division topics, and of their dependence upon the subject of the essay. On the other hand, whenever he loses the thread of the construction, he can at once pause at the troublesome point and subject that part of the essay to as rigid an analysis — paragraph and sentence — as may be necessary to clear up the confusion, or definitely place the blame for it upon the author, if it should rest there.

[1] See p. xiii.

The test of the analysis of an essay lies in a *Précis* or *Outline*, in which the main topics and subtopics are reduced to propositions, each proposition being introduced with a connecting word or phrase that clearly shows the nature of its position in the general logical pattern of the essay. Opposite each proposition, moreover, may be placed the name of the type of statement to which it belongs.

Analysis of an Essay

(Mill, *On Liberty*, Chap. I, Introductory.[1])

1. *Logical Pattern and General Summary*

The predominant logical method of this essay is Definition with Division and Enthymeme. The notion defined is *Civil Liberty*, or, more particularly, "the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual" (p. 33).

The various definitions given to this nature and these limits at different stages of the history of society are first expounded; and then it is argued that the proper definition of these limits in modern democratic society is contained in the principle "that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection" (pp. 42-43). The sphere of civil liberty is then defined as "comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or if it affects others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and participation" (p. 45); and this sphere is divided into three parts: the liberty of conscience, thought, opinion, and feeling; the liberty of tastes and pursuits; and the liberty of combination among individuals for any purpose not involving harm to others.

[1] For this essay, see pp. 33–48 of this volume.

2. *Précis or Outline*

A. Particularization, *i.e.*, Literary Definition, of the topic of the essay.	A. The subject of the essay is Civil Liberty, or, more particularly, the nature and limits of the legitimate power of society over the individual (p. 33).
I. Division of the topic, and Definition of the first head.	I. In the *earlier stages* of society, where absolute governments existed, this Civil Liberty meant the limitation of the power which an encroaching ruler should be suffered to exercise over a community (pp. 33–34),
(1) Enumeration.	(1) by obtaining a recognition of popular political rights,
(2) Enumeration.	(2) by establishing constitutional checks.
II. Division of the topic; the second head in form of a General Statement (or Mere Predication).	II. In *later stages* of society, where popular, democratic forms of government existed, Civil Liberty, or the limitation of the governing power, was obtained by delegating the power to elective and temporary rulers (p. 35).
(1) Deduction in Enthymeme.	(1) Since the power was only a delegated and revocable power, it was not deemed necessary, at first, to limit the power itself (p. 35).
(2) Enthymeme.	(2) But, later, it became evident that this was a wrong assumption, because popular government in practice is government by only a part (the most active part, or the majority) of the people, and because this government by one part may involve a tyranny over other parts (p. 36).
Enthymeme.	Hence Civil Liberty demands limitation of the governing power even in popular governments (pp. 36–37).
General Statement, with Enthymeme.	But this tyranny of a majority expresses itself not only in laws, but also in public opinion (p. 37); hence individual liberty

must be protected against the tyranny of public opinion, as well as against the tyranny of law (p. 37).

(*a*) General Statement (Singular as Universal).

(*a*) But just where to place the limit to this tyranny of the majority has not yet been undertaken systematically as a problem (pp. 37–38).

Contrast.

On the contrary, the actual practice of limiting this tyranny rests on mere preference or feeling, without principle (pp. 38–41).

Exemplification.

As may be seen in England (pp. 41–42).

(*b*) Literary Definition.

(*b*) The correct principle of checking this tyranny is that "the sole end for which mankind are warranted . . . in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection" (p. 43). (Development of this point omitted here.)

(*c*) Definition and Division.

(*c*) In accordance with

	this principle, individual liberty is defined and divided as already indicated in the General Summary given above (p. xl).
(*x*) General Statement.	(*x*) No society is free that does not provide for this liberty (p. 46).
(*y*) Implied General Statement.	(*y*) The present tendency of society is opposed to this liberty (pp. 46–48).

Rules for Making a *Précis*

(*a*) For making a *Prècis* of a paragraph:

(1) Analyze the statements of the paragraph: the main statement can then be easily distinguished from its immediately subordinate statements, as well as from those parts that support the subordinate statements (sub-subordinate parts).

(2) Dispense with the sub-subordinate parts.

(3) Express in condensed form the principal statement and its immediate subordinates, taking care to indicate by the appropriate conjunctions the nature of the relations between the principal and subordinate statements.

(4) If a more condensed *précis* is required, the immediately subordinate statements may be omitted, provided they do not involve any very material modification of the idea of the main statement.

(5) Omit all introductory tags, such as, *the paragraph states, the author maintains*, etc.

(*b*) The same rules may be extended to the making of a *précis* of a division, or essay, or chapter, or book, by the proper substitution of terms: *e.g.*, paragraphs, or divisions, or chapters for statements; division, or chapter, or book for paragraph, etc.

Application to Original Composition

By the use of this apparatus the task of expository analysis is rendered a comparatively exact discipline. The student has in his hands a method that will bring order out of confusion and substitute sureness for hesitation, whenever he is set the task of discovering exactly what another has written. In many cases the sureness to be obtained, it must be admitted, is of a negative nature, *viz.*, a conviction that the author is himself confused. But clearly to know that the cause of confusion is in the text, and not in the reader himself, is by no means undesirable.

But of what aid is the apparatus when the student himself must engage in expository composition? The answer is brief and to the point: the apparatus, faithfully applied whenever necessary, will render the student his own best critic, and his own teacher.

In the first place, whenever a student feels that his paragraph or essay is not "going" just right, that the ideas are not "matching," an application of the apparatus will at once make him fully conversant with the actual nature of what he has written, and will suggest in turn what must be changed in order to render the sequence methodical. Again, when one has finished a piece of writing to his own satisfaction, an application of the apparatus will give a methodical, impersonal means of checking what has been said, discovering its demerits in orderliness and precision, or, as the case may be, substantiating the first favorable judgment of one's own work. Thus, too, in the actual practice of

teaching, the instructor need not show a student just where in a given paragraph or division of the essay there is some error in unity or coherence; it is enough to call the student's attention to the portion in question, and require the student to test for himself the correctness of the passage by the application of the apparatus. Often, moreover, familiarity with the general methods of developing thought will suggest new trains of thought in dealing with given subjects, and thus the student's originative powers may be aided. Finally, faithful practice in the use of the apparatus in both analysis and composition will soon so accustom the mind to looking for orderly methods in writing and speaking that the striving for these signs of intellectual achievement and maturity will become habitual. Then, indeed, the student may with safety be graduated from his "course," for then he will have become his own teacher and critic.

Function of the Types in Exposition

Knowledge of the nature of each kind of statement involves a knowledge of its effectiveness for order and precision. Already, for example, we know that the presence of Mere Predications in the middle of a paragraph raises a presumption of incoherence; already we know what types preserve unity and coherence; already we know the value of definition and exemplification.

Our knowledge and love of order increase as we discover the difficulty of analyzing material that is poorly ordered and incoherent. We have taken a vast step in advance when we come to loathe incoherence, when poor construction rasps us like a discord of musical notes. And the hating of these implies the love of perfect construction, of the clear, bright joy of thought molded in strong, salient form.

And the love of clear construction, of the *labor et virtus* of the intellect, is an asset of character.

But though a knowledge of the function of the various types in securing order and clearness thus is borne in upon the student

who is familiar with the types themselves, nevertheless it may be of use to append here a very brief account of these functions.

(1) **Definition** (including Particularization) should be used to clear up ambiguities and the meaning of uncommon terms in the main subject of a discourse and in the various subtopics and statements. Definition determines meaning and secures intelligibility.

(2) **Division** (including Enumeration of Topics) provides an exhaustive or merely convenient arrangement of the subject under discussion, with an indication of whether the whole or a part, and if a part what part, of the subject is to be treated.

(3) **Exemplification** and **Comparison** expound and clarify the nature of a proposition by associating it with known cases or similars. From these two types, also, springs much of the interest of an essay, since a good choice of examples and comparisons may enliven a proposition and render it concrete.

(4) **Inference** proves the truth of a proposition, thus indirectly expounding it. Its chief function, however, is persuasion. Properly, it is the method of argumentation; but it is constantly used in exposition.

(5) **Generalization** shows the wider relations of a topic, and thus secures interest and perhaps wonder; or, through formal induction, arrives at a general law or truth concerning a given topic.

(6) **Iteration** and **Obverse Iteration**, as already noted, enforce a statement. They also aid in clarifying thought.

BENJAMIN P. KURTZ.

ON STYLE

As we approach the problem of what, with a hundred different meanings vague and clear, we call "style," we must remember first of all and constantly that what has already been said about structure and coherence is of supreme importance here. Yet

this basic principle is so frequently forgotten by young writers, whether slovenly over reluctant toil or strenuous with high hopes, that we can well understand why Mr. Frederic Harrison in a charming essay *On English Prose* has said: "About Style, in the higher sense of the term, I think the young student should trouble himself as little as possible. When he does, it too often becomes the art of clothing thin ideas in well-made garments." [1] And Swift, whose prose style is so hard to analyze because it is like crystal and whose style is called by some the greatest in our language, defined it quite simply as "proper words in proper places." [2] In spite of Stevenson's love of the luxury of sound he paid his highest tribute to this same element of clearness when he said that the writer's "pattern, which is to please the supersensual ear, is yet addressed, throughout and first of all, to the demands of logic." [3]

All this, though convincing enough, may seem quite discouraging. Since the masters of prose agree that we must seek clearness above all things, does it not seem likely that clearness, so urgently stressed, is a most difficult thing to attain? It is. Yet one simple bit of counsel, well followed, will help the humblest writer to temper his discouragement. Let him be sure to grow full of his subject before he writes, to pass beyond the perfunctory mood that dictates most themes. If he begins early enough to ponder and plan his material, it will be a most unusual subject that will not ultimately stir him with an eagerness to make his convictions, so real to him, clear to another. If you have that eagerness, you have half won a momentous battle. And if you are dreaming of literary fame and, as often happens in such cases, you are a little contemptuous of what mere rhetoricians tell you, remember that clearness is in itself a beautiful

[1] *Tennyson, Ruskin, Mill, and Other Literary Estimates.* 1900.

[2] *Prose Works,* Ed. Temple Scott, Vol. III: "Letter to a Young Clergyman lately entered into Holy Orders."

[3] "On Style in Literature: Its Technical Elements," *Contemporary Review,* 47: 548. 1885.

thing. If you do not feel this very deeply as a first consideration, turn from your printed page to admire the well-knit massiness of some great piece of architecture, and remember that when we are talking about clearness, we are talking about the architecture of prose.

But we must not allow Mr. Harrison to give us the notion that clearness is the one tangible element in style. Now this clearness is what Walter Pater happily called "mind in style"; but he has much to say about another important quality that he calls "soul in style."[1] But when we turn to Pater for a definition of this second quality, we are at once fascinated and puzzled. We know that in order to attain "mind in style" we must be perfectly logical, and, no matter how profound, transparent. Yet how can we fathom the mysteries of "soul in style" by which the writer, so Pater tells us, "reaches us, somewhat capriciously perhaps, one and not another, through vagrant sympathy and a kind of immediate contact"? Why even this quality is so closely allied with clearness that it is more tangible than you suppose. And, though some of it may elude us until we have read oceans of great prose for years, we may come to understand a good deal of it by what may seem at first to be a purely mechanical analysis of sentences and words.

There are three principal kinds of sentences, the periodic, the balanced, and the loose. In a periodic sentence we have to wait until we have read to the end or nearly to the end before we can understand it. We may take a famous example from De Quincey, a sentence about his strange, prematurely wise boyhood.

"Upon me, as upon others scattered thinly by tens and twenties over every thousand years fell too powerfully and too early the vision of life."

You will observe that if you attempt to cut off that sentence with a period anywhere before the word "vision" you will not find

[1] *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style.* London and New York. 1890.

sense. That is a pure periodic sentence. It is a structure which can be made to unfold itself to ten times the length of our example, but with a growing peril of obscurity and heaviness. Sometimes a sentence, all but perfectly periodic, after holding back the key to the meaning for several lines, admits, as in the case of the sentence which I am now writing, a short phrase or clause at the end, which may be struck off without serious injury to the general meaning. But a periodic sentence always delays the word or words of main and essential significance until the close or very near the close. Thus it is sure to satisfy the demands of emphasis, though it may lose something in coherence and though it tempts some unwary writers to violate unity. But Herbert Spencer found the periodic sentence the most "direct" of forms, the most conducive to his fundamental principle of "economy," because it "conveys each thought into the mind step by step with little liability to error." [1] And if you read that sentence of De Quincey's aloud, you will see that it has at least one great quality for which you may search page after page of our newspapers and our magazines in vain: it has the quality of stateliness.

There are two characteristics that go to the making of balanced sentences — parallel structure and antithesis or contrast. Macaulay's pages glitter with contrasts. Few of us will ever forget the fierce thrusts of antithesis in his attack on Charles I in the essay on Milton.

"We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defence is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to

[1] *The Philosophy of Style*, Ed. Scott, Second edition, Boston. 1895. The student will find nearly all the essays to which I have referred conveniently collected and admirably edited in Professor W. T. Brewster's *Representative Essays on the Theory of Style*, New York and London. The Macmillan Company. 1905.

observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning!"

Macaulay was also very fond of parallel structure, a device by which you shape your phrases or clauses by the repetition and pairing of words and by similarities of order or construction. But for variety's sake I turn from Macaulay to a subtler writer, Cardinal Newman, to some sentences in his *Idea of a University*.

"He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he conceives vividly; he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse."

Here you will see both antithesis (the contrast of words like *writes* and *feels*, *passionately* and *keenly*), and parallel structure. You will see how the structure is made parallel by the repetition of *because* in the first two clauses. There is a danger of monotony and artificiality in such a manner which not infrequently tempts Macaulay too far. But Newman is more subtle. You will observe that he resists the temptation to repeat *because* in the second and third sections of the first sentence, though it would have been an easy thing to do. He chooses the word *too* and he changes the general construction, though he is careful to keep that new construction identical in the two clauses. Similarly, by the repetition of *therefore* and *when*, and by marked changes of order accompanied by marked pairing of clauses, he goes on to enrich his sentence with parallels, with variety, and with naturalness. You may use balance in a periodical sentence. You may use antithesis or parallel structure alone or together. It is evident that such a type of sentence is likely to have a very well-woven coherence; you see clearly the relations of its parts.

The loose sentence is the most natural and the most treacherous of all types. It is called loose because you may frequently separate it into two or more parts, each of which will make per-

fect sense by itself. A wag has said that De Quincey would quite naturally, in an elaborate and ponderous periodic sentence, ask a servant to pick up his valise. But most of us talk in loose sentences. It is fatally easy to violate unity with them. But, with their pleasant conversational quality, they would save a prevailingly periodic or balanced manner from becoming heavy or artificial. And in the hands of a man like Carlyle they often give an effect of fine impetuosity. Here is a loose sentence from Carlyle's account of the fall of the Bastille that seems almost to splutter in its savage vehemence.

"A young, beautiful lady, seized, escaping, in these outer courts, and thought, falsely, to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burnt in De Launay's sight: she lies, swooned, on a paillasse; but, again, a patriot — it is brave Aubin Bonnemère, the old soldier — dashes in and rescues her."

But Carlyle began his literary career by writing the most carefully formal periodic sentences. You must learn with Carlyle to observe the rules before you attempt to break them. Richard Strauss, one of the most audacious and revolutionary of the modern musicians, steeped himself with the classical music of Mozart before he ventured to approach even the only partially romantic pages of Beethoven. Wagner became a very learned master of harmony and counterpoint before he rode rough-shod over the rules.

Now we may often grasp something of the elusive personalities of authors, their "soul in style," by noting their favorite types of sentences. But few good writers, great or humble, use any type to excess. The ideal style, alike for a critical essay on a poet and for an experiment station bulletin, the attractive and readable style, is marked by variety. Stevenson has a discerning passage on emphasis and variety.

"The pleasure may be heightened by an element of surprise, as, very grossly, in the common figure of antithesis, or, with much greater subtlety, where an antithesis is first suggested, and then deftly evaded. Each phrase, besides, is to be comely in itself; and between the implication and the evolu-

tion of the sentence there should be a satisfying equipoise of sound; for nothing more often disappoints the ear than a sentence solemnly and sonorously prepared, and hastily and weakly finished. Nor should the balance be too striking and exact, for the one rule is to be infinitely various; to interest, to disappoint, to surprise, and yet still to gratify; to be ever changing, as it were, the stitch, and yet still to give the effect of an ingenious neatness."

The simple short sentence should not be forgotten. It can awaken the languid reader like the crack of a rifle. Macaulay was a master at this, and he has done much to mold modern journalism. But modern journalists and modern short-story writers, with a jaded and sensation-loving public in mind, have overdone this trick. Do not be deceived by fashions that pass in the night. In his day De Quincey felt constrained to accuse the journalists of overdoing the periodic sentence. Yet as we read his essay on style we wonder what forgotten reviewer could possibly have been more ponderous than the censorious master himself. On the other hand, read a few pages of Mr. Chesterton's prose as a typical example of the manner of many clever writers of our day and you will see that for all his brilliant phrasing there is something at fault. The style is too nervous. Even our sensation-loving minds tire of the continuous snap and flare. Turn back to those sentences of De Quincey and Newman and you feel as one whose aching nerves have been soothed by the ministrations of some master physician. Mr. Chesterton has no rhythm; there is an abundance of the stirring quickstep, but none of the solemn and healing majesty of sound and cadence.

If you wish to appreciate rhythm in prose — and the humblest writer should certainly study it — you should read great prose aloud habitually. Rhythm may seem intangible at first. But to master some sense of it (as all of us can), will save the young writer from many a shambling or unwieldy sentence. Aristotle summed it up long ago when he described prose as "neither possessing metre nor destitute of rhythm." In our own day

Stevenson has said the same thing more elaborately and with wonderful grace.

"The rule of scansion in verse is to suggest no measure but the one in hand; in prose, to suggest no measure at all. Prose must be rhythmical, and it may be as much as you will; but it must not be metrical. It may be anything, but it must not be verse. A single heroic line may very well pass and not disturb the larger stride of the prose style; but one following another will produce an instant impression of poverty, flatness, and disenchantment. The same lines delivered with the measured utterance of verse would perhaps seem rich in variety. By the more summary enunciation proper to prose, as to a more distant vision, these niceties of difference are lost. A whole verse is uttered as one phrase; and the ear is soon wearied by a succession of groups identical in length. The prose writer, in fact, since he is allowed to be so much less harmonious, is condemned to a perpetually fresh variety of movement on a larger scale, and must never disappoint the ear by the trot of an accepted metre."

Perhaps the best way to begin your study of rhythm is to read aloud first those masters who have cultivated it rather self-consciously, though it is very dangerous to imitate them until you are in full control of your ideas and of the principle of clearness. De Quincey, for all his artificiality, will help you greatly to appreciate rhythm. Or, turn to some famous sentences by Sir Walter Raleigh.

"O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic Jacet*."

As you read that aloud you feel an exaltation, a lift that you cannot quite analyze. Now you can train yourselves in due time to feel even in the almost conversational prose of a Stevenson a marked rhythm.

From sentences we turn to the smallest units in composition, words. You have all been taught to avoid slang, ugly and crude colloquialisms, words that are current in only one locality (be it a

village or a third of a continent), foreign words where the English word says all you wish to say. In short, you have been told to conform to " Good Use," the practice of a large body of our best writers of this generation. Great writers and small writers, to be sure, have coined happy words which now enrich our language. " Starvation," however commonplace it now seems, is a young word that made a great sensation in Parliament not so very long ago. Carlyle was taken to task by his friend Sterling for coining certain words many of which, like " visualize," are now often used without protest by fluent writers. Slang, too, has always enriched the best language of the future. " Delirium " is derived from a slang phrase from some clever Latin who described a crazy man picturesquely as " off his furrow." But, as I have said before, you must learn to observe the rules first if you ever expect to impress anybody with the way you can break them. When a careful and eloquent speaker deliberately and carefully uses a slang phrase, we are forcibly struck by it. When a crude speaker, with a vocabulary of a few hundred words, picks up a convenient phrase from the gutter, he brands himself with his own poverty-stricken slovenliness.

Within the limits of " Good Use " you have more to learn than you can master in a lifetime. You will grow more and more skillful in knowing a writer's style, too, if you make a special effort to know his favorite types of words. The pomp of De Quincey's Latinisms is unmistakable. Equally unmistakable are Thackeray's idioms with their perfect ease and yet with their perfect elegance. Once more remember that variety is the great rule. As Pater says of the ideal writer: " Racy Saxon monosyllables, close to us as touch and sight, he will intermix with those long savoursome Latin words, rich in ' second intention.' "

You have not only to master the meaning, the denotation of an immense vocabulary of accepted words stored up for you in the treasure houses of an army of distinguished writers, but you have to grow sensitive to the associations which cling around

words as subtly as fragrance, now lending them an added beauty through the subtle magic of memories, now making them seem degraded or absurd. You must, in other words, grow sensitive to connotations. And you must pay some attention to the music or euphony of words. If you should write, "The veteran's face was lugubrious as he stood by his old comrade's grave," why would your sentence provoke a smile? "Lugubrious" is a synonym for "sorrowful." But for some mysterious reason "lugubrious" has come to have rather humorous connotations. The meaning, the denotation, is all right. But the connotation makes it more appropriate for a detailed description of Shakespeare's famous schoolboy whose "Shining mourning face" was doubtless the index of feelings sincere enough, but feelings which tempt us to laugh. "Sorrowful" is still untouched by a ludicrous connotation. Note too that it is much more musical, with its liquid *r's* uncontaminated by the hard explosive *b* and with one instead of two of those sounds which the poet Francis Thompson calls "mouse-shrewd *u's*."

Now whether you have a meager vocabulary or whether you have acquired a very rich diction, you are equally likely to be tempted to violate the important principle of economy by a wasteful habit called tautology, the use of two words of similar meaning where one will do. Nowadays we are particularly sensitive to this fault. In Shakespeare's day words used in pairs were considered a grace in style. Why is it that even now when we read phrases like Sir Francis Bacon's "mighty and powerful" and the innumerable pairs of similar words in the King James Version of the Bible we are impressed by their beauty and force? There are several reasons. While Anglo-Saxon was slowly blending with Norman-French, it was necessary for many people to be bilingual, to use both the French and the Saxon word in general conversation. This gradually became a habit of the new language which remained after it was no longer a necessity. Again, since no two words are absolutely identical in meaning and

in connotation, the effect of a pair is richer. Finally, a phrase like Bacon's " mighty and powerful " is more stately than a single word. In our own day Stevenson loves to pair similar words. But most cases of tautology in young writers are bad. If you attempt the trick, be sure that you do it advisedly. Be sure that your richness or force or stateliness justifies your violation of economy. The Elizabethans were delightful and generous old spendthrifts with words. But our masters of later centuries have come more and more to value economy, and economy has not taken the bloom of youth from the wonderfully complex and oceanic English language. " The artist," said the German poet Schiller, " may be known rather by what he omits." Walter Pater quotes this approvingly and goes on to write a very memorable warning against what he calls " surplusage."

"For in truth all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem-engraver blowing away the last particle of invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be, lying somewhere, according to Michelangelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone."

Sensitiveness to connotation, profuseness, or severe condensation are qualities which, duly noted, all help us to track the personality of a writer, to make our own personalities more marked and refreshing. Finally, in figures of speech, we have one more partly mechanical means of classifying and describing various styles. Figures of speech are often most serviceable and vital tricks of language. We use scores of them every day without knowing it. The language is full of words and phrases so completely absorbed from great writers that they seem quite literal. " Delirium," as we have seen, was once a figure of speech. Many people who speak of a " towering passion " do not know that they are quoting Shakespeare and do not realize what a magnificent and vivid and useful figure they are retailing. But most rhetoricians warn you against the use of figures. This is because too many young writers " lug them in." If they seem

to grow out of your prose, if they do not seem like taudry bits of paper pasted on a cloth of pure and sober color, if they seem forceful and attractive and, above all, an aid to clearness when you *reread* them, they may be justifiable. But do not be afraid of striking them out. If you ever come to study the manuscript of Milton's *Comus*, you will see places where he drew his pen ruthlessly through lines splendid enough to capitalize a minor poet, simply because they did not seem to him, on rereading, sufficiently a part of the very fiber of his poem.

There yet remains something of the magic of style which defies all formal analysis. It is probably associated with personality. "The style," said Buffon, "that's the man himself." So thought Cardinal Newman [1] and many others. Although we have found that we may track down personality, to a certain extent, by somewhat mechanical analysis and classification, we shall still find something which eludes all labels. Sometimes a happy phrase, a figure of speech perhaps, will come to us (if we read and reread), which will illumine the most elusive element of a writer's personality. Only constant reading and sustained talking will do that. As for our own writing, the best way to impress others with our own personalities is to forget about them and to fill ourselves full of the great personalities of others, the most choice in the past and in our own day; to write and speak constantly; and to choose always subjects which will fire us with an enthusiasm that brings unconscious fluency, a fluency to be in turn reëxamined through revision in those more sober moods of polishing which, according to the testimony of most great writers, bring the most happy and haunting turns of phrase.

HERBERT E. CORY.

[1] *The Idea of a University*, "Literature." See Brewster, *op. cit.*

ON THE DEFINITION AND PROVINCE OF LOGIC

John Stuart Mill

(1806–1873)

[John Stuart Mill, the eldest son of James Mill, the utilitarian, was a celebrated original thinker and writer in what he himself calls "abstract science (logic, metaphysics, and the theoretic principles of political economy and politics)."

A precocious child, he was brought up by his father, by whom he was subjected to an extraordinary intellectual regimen almost from infancy. He began publishing at an early age. His first work to command general attention was the famous *Logic* (1843). In 1848 appeared his *Political Economy*. His most carefully prepared work, which he himself held to be his best, is the *Essay on Liberty* (1859). He wrote many other works and articles on philosophical, metaphysical, economic, political, and even poetic subjects; was editor for several years of the *London Review* and the *London and Westminster Review;* and was elected member of Parliament for Westminster in 1865. For many years he occupied an important position in the India House, where he gained practical experience in government through having in charge the Company's relations with the native Indian states.

In all the departments of thought that he touched, Mill exercised great influence, and he ranks as one of the foremost original thinkers of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the elevated tone of his writings, their freedom from jealousy and rancor, their calm and judicial impersonality, their perspicuity and precision, make them a model of dignified and impressive exposition of abstract questions.

Mill was primarily interested in humanitarian questions, and he strove to discover a practical theory of human development. But he realized that the main difficulty in the way of gaining a generally acceptable theory about such a matter, lies in the fact that all ethical and social discussions lack a definite, common *method* of research and evidence, such as that enjoyed by the physical sciences. From the lack of such a universally recognized method, he believed, springs constant disagreement among philosophers. He endeavored, therefore, and it was one of the chief aims of his life, to supply this deficiency by elaborating a system of logic that would be universally appli-

cable to such discussions. Thus he came to write his *Logic*, which he regarded as merely a means to the greater end of securing definiteness and agreement in humanitarian discussions. In the *Logic*, then, Mill endeavors to supplement and extend the old syllogistic logic by a thorough exposition of inductive logic, and this combination of the two logical systems he put forward as the much needed method. The Introduction to the *Logic*, which constitutes our first selection from Mill, clears the way for the main work by provisionally defining the term logic. The author expounds the relation of logic to the art and science of reasoning, to the art and science of the pursuit of truth, and to other sciences. Its utility is then declared, and a provisional definition is stated and expanded.

In our second selection, which forms Chapter XI of Book VI of the *Logic*, Mill considers some questions that arise in connection with applying definite, scientific methods to the study of history. He maintains that "the subjection of historical facts to uniform laws is verified by statistics; [and that this] does not imply the insignificance of moral causes, nor the inefficacy of the characters of individuals and of the acts of governments." Examples are then cited of "the historical importance of eminent men and of the policy of governments."

In the *Essay on Liberty*, the introductory chapter of which is our third selection from Mill, the author contends that individual liberty in conscience, discussion, and action should be protected against a growing tendency of the majority to tyrannize over the individual by means of law and public opinion. The introductory chapter opens the discussion by considering the various definitions of civil liberty that have arisen at different stages of society, and by stating Mill's own idea of individual liberty, which is the subject of the five chapters that follow in the complete essay.]

§ 1. THERE is as great diversity among authors in the modes which they have adopted of defining logic, as in their treatment of the details of it. This is what might naturally be expected on any subject on which writers have availed themselves of the same language as a means of delivering different ideas. Ethics and jurisprudence are liable to the remark in common with logic. Almost every writer having taken a different view of some of the particulars which these branches of knowledge are usually understood to include, each has so framed his definition as to indicate beforehand his own peculiar tenets, and sometimes to beg the question in their favour.

The diversity is not so much an evil to be complained of, as an inevitable and in some degree a proper result of the imper-

fect state of those sciences. It is not to be expected that there should be agreement about the definition of anything, until there is agreement about the thing itself. To define, is to select from among all the properties of a thing, those which shall be understood to be designated and declared by its name; and the properties must be well known to us before we can be competent to determine which of them are fittest to be chosen for this purpose. Accordingly, in the case of so complex an aggregation of particulars as are comprehended in anything which can be called a science, the definition we set out with is seldom that which a more extensive knowledge of the subject shows to be the most appropriate. Until we know the particulars themselves, we cannot fix upon the most correct and compact mode of circumscribing them by a general description. It was not until after an extensive and accurate acquaintance with the details of chemical phenonema, that it was found possible to frame a rational definition of chemistry; and the definition of the science of life and organization is still a matter of dispute. So long as the sciences are imperfect, the definitions must partake of their imperfection; and if the former are progressive, the latter ought to be so too. As much, therefore, as is to be expected from a definition placed at the commencement of a subject, is that it should define the scope of our inquiries: and the definition which I am about to offer of the science of logic, pretends to nothing more, than to be a statement of the question which I have put to myself, and which this book is an attempt to resolve. The reader is at liberty to object to it as a definition of logic; but it is at all events a correct definition of the subject of these volumes.

§ 2. Logic has often been called the Art of Reasoning. A writer [1] who has done more than any other person to restore this study to the rank from which it had fallen in the estimation of the cultivated class in our own country, has adopted the

[1] Archbishop Whately.

above definition with an amendment; he has defined Logic to be the Science, as well as the Art, of reasoning; meaning by the former term, the analysis of the mental process which takes place whenever we reason, and by the latter, the rules, grounded on that analysis, for conducting the process correctly. There can be no doubt as to the propriety of the emendation. A right understanding of the mental process itself, of the conditions it depends on, and the steps of which it consists, is the only basis on which a system of rules, fitted for the direction of the process, can possibly be founded. Art necessarily presupposes knowledge; art, in any but its infant state, presupposes scientific knowledge: and if every art does not bear the name of a science, it is only because several sciences are often necessary to form the groundwork of a single art. So complicated are the conditions which govern our practical agency, that to enable one thing to be *done*, it is often requisite to *know* the nature and properties of many things.

Logic, then, comprises the science of reasoning, as well as an art, founded on that science. But the word Reasoning, again, like most other scientific terms in popular use, abounds in ambiguities. In one of its acceptations, it means syllogizing; or the mode of inference which may be called (with sufficient accuracy for the present purpose) concluding from generals to particulars. In another of its senses, to reason is simply to infer any assertion, from assertions already admitted: and in this sense induction is as much entitled to be called reasoning as the demonstrations of geometry.

Writers on logic have generally preferred the former acceptation of the term: the latter, and more extensive signification is that in which I mean to use it. I do this by virtue of the right I claim for every author, to give whatever provisional definition he pleases of his own subject. But sufficient reasons will, I believe, unfold themselves as we advance, why this should be not only the provisional but the final definition. It involves, at all

events, no arbitrary change in the meaning of the word; for, with the general usage of the English language, the wider signification, I believe, accords better than the more restricted one.

§ 3. But Reasoning, even in the widest sense of which the word is susceptible, does not seem to comprehend all that is included, either in the best, or even in the most current, conception of the scope and province of our science. The employment of the word Logic to denote the theory of Argumentation, is derived from the Aristotelian, or, as they are commonly termed, the scholastic, logicians. Yet even with them, in their systematic treatises, Argumentation was the subject only of the third part: the two former treated of Terms, and of Propositions; under one or other of which heads were also included Definition and Division. By some, indeed, these previous topics were professedly introduced only on account of their connexion with reasoning, and as a preparation for the doctrine and rules of the syllogism. Yet they were treated with greater minuteness, and dwelt on at greater length, than was required for that purpose alone. More recent writers on logic have generally understood the term as it was employed by the able author of the Port Royal Logic; *viz.*, as equivalent to the Art of Thinking. Nor is this acceptation confined to books, and scientific inquiries. Even in ordinary conversation, the ideas connected with the word Logic include at least precision of language, and accuracy of classification: and we perhaps oftener hear persons speak of a logical arrangement, or of expressions logically defined, than of conclusions logically deduced from premises. Again, a man is often called a great logician, or a man of powerful logic, not for the accuracy of his deductions, but for the extent of his command over premises; because the general propositions required for explaining a difficulty or refuting a sophism, copiously and promptly occur to him: because, in short, his knowledge, besides being ample,

is well under his command for argumentative use. Whether, therefore, we conform to the practice of those who have made the subject their particular study, or to that of popular writers and common discourse, the province of logic will include several operations of the intellect not usually considered to fall within the meaning of the terms Reasoning and Argumentation.

These various operations might be brought within the compass of the science, and the additional advantage be obtained of a very simple definition, if, by an extension of the term, sanctioned by high authorities, we were to define logic as the science which treats of the operations of the human understanding in the pursuit of truth. For to this ultimate end, naming, classification, definition, and all other operations over which logic has ever claimed jurisdiction, are essentially subsidiary. They may all be regarded as contrivances for enabling a person to know the truths which are needful to him, and to know them at the precise moment at which they are needful. Other purposes, indeed, are also served by these operations; for instance, that of imparting our knowledge to others. But, viewed with regard to this purpose, they have never been considered as within the province of the logician. The sole object of Logic is the guidance of one's own thoughts: the communication of those thoughts to others falls under the consideration of Rhetoric, in the large sense in which that art was conceived by the ancients; or of the still more extensive art of Education. Logic takes cognizance of our intellectual operations, only as they conduce to our own knowledge, and to our command over that knowledge for our own uses. If there were but one rational being in the universe, that being might be a perfect logician; and the science and art of logic would be the same for that one person as for the whole human race.

§ 4. But, if the definition which we formerly examined included too little, that which is now suggested has the opposite fault of including too much.

Truths are known to us in two ways: some are known directly, and of themselves; some through the medium of other truths. The former are the subject of Intuition, or Consciousness;[1] the latter, of Inference. The truths known by intuition are the original premises from which all others are inferred. Our assent to the conclusion being grounded on the truth of the premises, we never could arrive at any knowledge by reasoning, unless something could be known antecedently to all reasoning.

Examples of truths known to us by immediate consciousness, are our own bodily sensations and mental feelings. I know directly, and of my own knowledge, that I was vexed yesterday, or that I am hungry to-day. Examples of truths which we know only by way of inference, are occurrences which took place while we were absent, the events recorded in history, or the theorems of mathematics. The two former we infer from the testimony adduced, or from the traces of those past occurrences which still exist; the latter, from the premises laid down in books of geometry, under the title of definitions and axioms. Whatever we are capable of knowing must belong to the one class or to the other; must be in the number of the primitive data, or of the conclusions which can be drawn from these.

With the original data, or ultimate premises of our knowledge: with their number or nature, the mode in which they are obtained, or the tests by which they may be distinguished; logic, in a direct way at least, has, in the sense in which I conceive the science, nothing to do. These questions are partly not a subject of science at all, partly that of a very different science.

Whatever is known to us by consciousness, is known beyond possibility of question. What one sees or feels, whether bodily or mentally, one cannot but be sure that one sees or feels. No

[1] I use these terms indiscriminately, because, for the purpose in view, there is no need for making any distinction between them. But metaphysicians usually restrict the name Intuition to the direct knowledge we are supposed to have of things external to our minds, and Consciousness to our knowledge of our own mental phenomena.

science is required for the purpose of establishing such truths; no rules of art can render our knowledge of them more certain than it is in itself. There is no logic for this portion of our knowledge.

But we may fancy that we see or feel what we in reality infer. A truth, or supposed truth, which is really the result of a very rapid inference, may seem to be apprehended intuitively. It has long been agreed by thinkers of the most opposite schools, that this mistake is actually made in so familiar an instance as that of the eyesight. There is nothing of which we appear to ourselves to be more directly conscious, than the distance of an object from us. Yet it has long been ascertained, that what is perceived by the eye, is at most nothing more than a variously coloured surface; that when we fancy we see distance, all we really see is certain variations of apparent size, and degrees of faintness of colour; that our estimate of the object's distance from us is the result partly of a rapid inference from the muscular sensations accompanying the adjustment of the focal distance of the eye to objects unequally remote from us, and partly of a comparison (made with so much rapidity that we are unconscious of making it) between the size and colour of the object as they appear at the time, and the size and colour of the same or of similar objects as they appeared when close at hand, or when their degree of remoteness was known by other evidence. The perception of distance by the eye, which seems so like intuition, is thus, in reality, an inference grounded on experience; an inference, too, which we learn to make; and which we make with more and more correctness as our experience increases; though in familiar cases it takes place so rapidly as to appear exactly on a par with those perceptions of sight which are really intuitive, our perceptions of colour.[1]

[1] This important theory has of late been called in question by a writer of deserved reputation, Mr. Samuel Bailey; but I do not conceive that the grounds on which it has been admitted as an established doctrine for a century past, have been at all shaken by that gentleman's objections. I have elsewhere said what appeared to

Of the science, therefore, which expounds the operations of the human understanding in the pursuit of truth, one essential part is the inquiry: What are the facts which are the objects of intuition or consciousness, and what are these which we merely infer? But this inquiry has never been considered a portion of logic. Its place is in another and a perfectly distinct department of science, to which the name metaphysics more particularly belongs: that portion of mental philosophy which attempts to determine what part of the furniture of the mind belongs to it originally, and what part is constructed out of materials furnished to it from without. To this science appertain the great and much debated questions of the existence of matter; the existence of spirit, and of a distinction between it and matter; the reality of time and space, as things without the mind, and distinguishable from the objects which are said to exist *in* them. For in the present state of the discussion on these topics, it is almost universally allowed that the existence of matter or of spirit, of space or of time, is in its nature unsusceptible of being proved; and that if anything is known of them, it must be by immediate intuition. To the same science belong the inquiries into the nature of Conception, Perception, Memory, and Belief; all of which are operations of the understanding in the pursuit of truth; but with which, as phenomena of the mind, or with the possibility which may or may not exist of analysing any of them into simpler phenomena, the logician as such has no concern. To this science must also be referred the following, and all analogous questions: To what extent our intellectual faculties and our emotions are innate — to what extent the result of association: Whether God, and duty, are realities, the existence of which is manifest to us *à priori* by the constitution of our rational faculty; or whether our ideas of them are acquired notions, the origin of which we are able to

me necessary in reply to his arguments. (*Westminster Review* for October 1842; reprinted in *Dissertations and Discussions*, vol. ii.)

trace and explain; and the reality of the objects themselves a question not of consciousness or intuition, but of evidence and reasoning.

The province of logic must be restricted to that portion of our knowledge which consists of inferences from truths previously known; whether those antecedent data be general propositions, or particular observations and perceptions. Logic is not the science of Belief, but the science of Proof, or Evidence. In so far as belief professes to be founded on proof, the office of logic is to supply a test for ascertaining whether or not the belief is well grounded. With the claims which any proposition has to belief on the evidence of consciousness, that is, without evidence in the proper sense of the word, logic has nothing to do.

§ 5. By far the greatest portion of our knowledge, whether of general truths or of particular facts, being avowedly matter of inference, nearly the whole, not only of science, but of human conduct, is amenable to the authority of logic. To draw inferences has been said to be the great business of life. Every one has daily, hourly, and momentary need of ascertaining facts which he has not directly observed; not from any general purpose of adding to his stock of knowledge, but because the facts themselves are of importance to his interests or to his occupations. The business of the magistrate, of the military commander, of the navigator, of the physician, of the agriculturist, is merely to judge of evidence, and to act accordingly. They all have to ascertain certain facts, in order that they may afterwards apply certain rules, either devised by themselves, or prescribed for their guidance by others; and as they do this well or ill, so they discharge well or ill the duties of their several callings. It is the only occupation in which the mind never ceases to be engaged; and is the subject, not of logic, but of knowledge in general.

Logic, however, is not the same thing with knowledge, though

the field of logic is coextensive with the field of knowledge. Logic is the common judge and arbiter of all particular investigations. It does not undertake to find evidence, but to determine whether it has been found. Logic neither observes, nor invents, nor discovers; but judges. It is no part of the business of logic to inform the surgeon what appearances are found to accompany a violent death. This he must learn from his own experience and observation, or from that of others, his predecessors in his peculiar pursuit. But logic sits in judgment on the sufficiency of that observation and experience to justify his rules, and on the sufficiency of his rules to justify his conduct. It does not give him proofs, but teaches him what makes them proofs, and how he is to judge of them. It does not teach that any particular fact proves any other, but points out to what conditions all facts must conform, in order that they may prove other facts. To decide whether any given fact fulfils these conditions, or whether facts can be found which fulfil them in a given case, belongs exclusively to the particular art or science, or to our knowledge of the particular subject.

It is in this sense that logic is, what it was so expressively called by the schoolmen and by Bacon, *ars artium;* the science of science itself. All science consists of data and conclusions from those data, of proofs and what they prove: now logic points out what relations must subsist between data and whatever can be concluded from them, between proof and everything which it can prove. If there be any such indispensable relations, and if these can be precisely determined, every particular branch of science, as well as every individual in the guidance of his conduct, is bound to conform to those relations, under the penalty of making false inferences — of drawing conclusions which are not grounded in the realities of things. Whatever has at any time been concluded justly, whatever knowledge has been acquired otherwise than by immediate intuition, depended on the observance of the laws which it is the province of logic to investi-

gate. If the conclusions are just, and the knowledge real, those laws, whether known or not, have been observed.

§ 6. We need not, therefore, seek any farther for a solution of the question, so often agitated, respecting the utility of logic. If a science of logic exists, or is capable of existing, it must be useful. If there be rules to which every mind consciously or unconsciously conforms in every instance in which it infers rightly, there seems little necessity for discussing whether a person is more likely to observe those rules, when he knows the rules, than when he is unacquainted with them.

A science may undoubtedly be brought to a certain, not inconsiderable, stage of advancement, without the application of any other logic to it than what all persons, who are said to have a sound understanding, acquire empirically in the course of their studies. Mankind judged of evidence, and often correctly, before logic was a science, or they never could have made it one. And they executed great mechanical works before they understood the laws of mechanics. But there are limits both to what mechanicians can do without principles of mechanics, and to what thinkers can do without principles of logic. A few individuals, by extraordinary genius, or by the accidental acquisition of a good set of intellectual habits, may work without principles in the same way, or nearly the same way, in which they would have worked if they had been in possession of principles. But the bulk of mankind require either to understand the theory of what they are doing, or to have rules laid down for them by those who have understood the theory. In the progress of science from its easiest to its more difficult problems, each great step in advance has usually had either as its precursor, or as its accompaniment and necessary condition, a corresponding improvement in the notions and principles of logic received among the most advanced thinkers. And if several of the more difficult sciences are still in so defective a state; if not only so

little is proved, but disputation has not terminated even about the little which seemed to be so; the reason perhaps is, that men's logical notions have not yet acquired the degree of extension, or of accuracy, requisite for the estimation of the evidence proper to those particular departments of knowledge.

§ 7. Logic, then, is the science of the operations of the understanding which are subservient to the estimation of evidence; both the process itself of advancing from known truths to unknown, and all other intellectual operations in so far as auxiliary to this. It includes, therefore, the operation of Naming; for language is an instrument of thought, as well as a means of communicating our thoughts. It includes, also, Definition, and Classification. For, the use of these operations (putting all other minds than one's own out of consideration) is to serve not only for keeping our evidences and the conclusions from them permanent and readily accessible in the memory, but for so marshalling the facts which we may at any time be engaged in investigating, as to enable us to perceive more clearly what evidence there is, and to judge with fewer chances of error whether it be sufficient. These, therefore, are operations specially instrumental to the estimation of evidence, and, as such, are within the province of Logic. There are other more elementary processes, concerned in all thinking, such as Conception, Memory, and the like; but of these it is not necessary that Logic should take any peculiar cognizance, since they have no special connexion with the problem of Evidence, further than that, like all other problems addressed to the understanding, it presupposes them.

Our object, then, will be, to attempt a correct analysis of the intellectual process called Reasoning or Inference, and of such other mental operations as are intended to facilitate this: as well as, on the foundation of this analysis, and *pari passu* with it, to bring together or frame a set of rules or canons for testing

the sufficiency of any given evidence to prove any given proposition.

With respect to the first part of this undertaking, I do not attempt to decompose the mental operations in questions into their ultimate elements. It is enough if the analysis as far as it goes is correct, and if it goes far enough for the practical purposes of logic considered as an art. The separation of a complicated phenomenon into its component parts is not like a connected and interdependent chain of proof. If one link of an argument breaks, the whole drops to the ground; but one step towards an analysis holds good and has an independent value, though we should never be able to make a second. The results which have been obtained by analytical chemistry are not the less valuable, though it should be discovered that all which we now call simple substances are really compounds. All other things are at any rate compounded of those elements: whether the elements themselves admit of decomposition, is an important inquiry, but does not affect the certainty of the science up to that point.

I shall, accordingly, attempt to analyse the process of inference, and the processes subordinate to inference, so far only as may be requisite for ascertaining the difference between a correct and an incorrect performance of those processes. The reason for thus limiting our design, is evident. It has been said by objectors to logic, that we do not learn to use our muscles by studying their anatomy. The fact is not quite fairly stated; for if the action of any of our muscles were vitiated by local weakness, or other physical defect, a knowledge of their anatomy might be very necessary for effecting a cure. But we should be justly liable to the criticism involved in this objection, were we, in a treatise on logic, to carry the analysis of the reasoning process beyond the point at which any inaccuracy which may have crept into it must become visible. In learning bodily exercise (to carry on the same illustration) we do, and must, analyse the

bodily motions so far as is necessary for distinguishing those which ought to be performed from those which ought not. To a similar extent, and no further, it is necessary that the logician should analyse the mental processes with which logic is concerned. Logic has no interest in carrying the analysis beyond the point at which it becomes apparent whether the operations have in any individual case been rightly or wrongly performed: in the same manner as the science of music teaches us to discriminate between musical notes, and to know the combinations of which they are susceptible, but not what number of vibrations in a second correspond to each; which, though useful to be known, is useful for totally different purposes. The extension of Logic as a Science is determined by its necessities as an Art: whatever it does not need for its practical ends, it leaves to the larger science which may be said to correspond, not to any particular art, but to art in general; the science which deals with the constitution of the human faculties; and to which, in the part of our mental nature which concerns Logic, as well as in all other parts, it belongs to decide what are ultimate facts, and what are resolvable into other facts. And I believe it will be found that most of the conclusions arrived at in this work have no necessary connexion with any particular views respecting the ulterior analysis. Logic is common ground on which the partisans of Hartley and of Reid, of Locke and of Kant may meet and join hands. Particular and detached opinions of all these thinkers will no doubt occasionally be controverted, since all of them were logicians as well as metaphysicians; but the field on which their principal battles have been fought, lies beyond the boundaries of our science.

It cannot, indeed, be pretended that logical principles can be altogether irrelevant to those more abstruse discussions; nor is it possible but that the view we are led to take of the problem which logic proposes, must have a tendency favourable to the adoption of some one opinion, on these controverted subjects,

rather than another. For metaphysics, in endeavouring to solve its own peculiar problem, must employ means, the validity of which falls under the cognizance of logic. It proceeds, no doubt, as far as possible, merely by a closer and more attentive interrogation of our consciousness, or more properly speaking, of our memory; and so far is not amenable to logic. But wherever this method is insufficient to attain the end of its inquiries, it must proceed, like other sciences, by means of evidence. Now, the moment this science begins to draw inferences from evidence, logic becomes the sovereign judge whether its inferences are well grounded, or what other inferences would be so.

This, however, constitutes no nearer or other relation between logic and metaphysics, than that which exists between logic and every other science. And I can conscientiously affirm, that no one proposition laid down in this work has been adopted for the sake of establishing, or with any reference to its fitness for being employed in establishing, preconceived opinions in any department of knowledge or of inquiry on which the speculative world is still undecided.[1]

[1] The view taken in the text, of the definition and purpose of Logic, stands in marked opposition to that of the school of philosophy which, in this country, is represented by the writings of Sir William Hamilton and of his numerous pupils. Logic, as this school conceives it, is "the Science of the Formal Laws of Thought;" a definition framed for the express purpose of excluding, as irrelevant to Logic, whatever relates to Belief and Disbelief, or to the pursuit of truth as such, and restricting the science to that very limited portion of its total province, which has reference to the conditions, not of Truth, but of Consistency. What I have thought it useful to say in opposition to this limitation of the field of Logic, has been said at some length in a separate work, first published in 1865, and entitled *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy, and of the Principal Philosophical Questions discussed in his Writings*. For the purpose of the present Treatise, I am content that the justification of the larger extension which I gave to the domain of the science, should rest on the sequel of the Treatise itself. Some remarks on the relation which the Logic of Consistency bears to the Logic of Truth, and on the place which that particular part occupies in the whole to which it belongs, will be found in the present volume (Book II. chap. iii. § 9).

ELUCIDATIONS OF THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY[1]

JOHN STUART MILL

§ 1. THE doctrine which the preceding chapters were intended to enforce and elucidate — that the collective series of social phenomena, in other words, the course of history, is subject to general laws, which philosophy may possibly detect — has been familiar for generations to the scientific thinkers of the Continent, and has for the last quarter of a century passed out of their peculiar domain into that of newspapers and ordinary political discussion. In our own country, however, at the time of the first publication of this Treatise, it was almost a novelty, and the prevailing habits of thought on historical subjects were the very reverse of a preparation for it. Since then a great change has taken place, and has been eminently promoted by the important work of Mr. Buckle, who, with characteristic energy, flung down this great principle, together with many striking exemplifications of it, into the arena of popular discussion, to be fought over by a sort of combatants in the presence of a sort of spectators, who would never even have been aware that there existed such a principle if they had been left to learn its existence from the speculations of pure science. And hence has arisen a considerable amount of controversy, tending not only to make the principle rapidly familiar to the majority of cultivated minds, but also to clear it from the confusions and misunderstandings by which it was but natural that it should for a time be clouded, and which impair the worth of the doctrine to those who accept it, and are the stumbling-block of many who do not.

[1] *A System of Logic, etc.*, 1843, Book VI. Chapter XI.

Among the impediments to the general acknowledgment, by thoughtful minds, of the subjection of historical facts to scientific laws, the most fundamental continues to be that which is grounded on the doctrine of Free Will, or, in other words, on the denial that the law of invariable Causation holds true of human volitions; for if it does not, the course of history, being the result of human volitions, cannot be a subject of scientific laws, since the volitions on which it depends can neither be foreseen nor reduced to any canon of regularity even after they have occurred. I have discussed this question, as far as seemed suitable to the occasion, in a former chapter, and I only think it necessary to repeat that the doctrine of the Causation of human actions, improperly called the doctrine of Necessity, affirms no mysterious *nexus* or overruling fatality: it asserts only that men's actions are the joint result of the general laws and circumstances of human nature, and of their own particular characters, those characters again being the consequence of the natural and artificial circumstances that constituted their education, among which circumstances must be reckoned their own conscious efforts. Any one who is willing to take (if the expression may be permitted) the trouble of thinking himself into the doctrine as thus stated, will find it, I believe, not only a faithful interpretation of the universal experience of human conduct, but a correct representation of the mode in which he himself, in every particular case, spontaneously interprets his own experience of that conduct.

But if this principle is true of individual man, it must be true of collective man. If it is the law of human life, the law must be realised in history. The experience of human affairs when looked at *en masse*, must be in accordance with it if true, or repugnant to it if false. The support which this *à posteriori* verification affords to the law is the part of the case which has been most clearly and triumphantly brought out by Mr. Buckle.

The facts of statistics, since they have been made a subject

of careful recordation and study, have yielded conclusions, some of which have been very startling to persons not accustomed to regard moral actions as subject to uniform laws. The very events which in their own nature appear most capricious and uncertain, and which in any individual case no attainable degree of knowledge would enable us to foresee, occur, when considerable numbers are taken into the account, with a degree of regularity approaching to mathematical. What act is there which all would consider as more completely dependent on individual character, and on the exercise of individual free will, than that of slaying a fellow-creature? Yet in any large country, the number of murders, in proportion to the population, varies (it has been found) very little from one year to another, and in its variations never deviates widely from a certain average. What is still more remarkable, there is a similar approach to constancy in the proportion of these murders annually committed with every particular kind of instrument. There is a like approximation to identity, as between one year and another, in the comparative number of legitimate and of illegitimate births. The same thing is found true of suicides, accidents, and all other social phenomena of which the registration is sufficiently perfect; one of the most curiously illustrative examples being the fact, ascertained by the registers of the London and Paris post-offices, that the number of letters posted which the writers have forgotten to direct is nearly the same, in proportion to the whole number of letters posted, in one year as in another. "Year after year," says Mr. Buckle, "the same proportion of letter-writers forget this simple act, so that for each successive period we can actually foretell the number of persons whose memory will fail them in regard to this trifling, and, as it might appear, accidental occurrence." [1]

This singular degree of regularity *en masse*, combined with the extreme of irregularity in the cases composing the mass, is a

[1] Buckle's *History of Civilisation*, i. 30.

felicitous verification *à posteriori* of the law of causation in its application to human conduct. Assuming the truth of that law, every human action, every murder, for instance, is the concurrent result of two sets of causes. On the one part, the general circumstances of the country and its inhabitants; the moral, educational, economical, and other influences operating on the whole people, and constituting what we term the state of civilisation. On the other part, the great variety of influences special to the individual: his temperament, and other peculiarities of organisation, his parentage, habitual associates, temptations, and so forth. If we now take the whole of the instances which occur within a sufficiently large field to exhaust all the combinations of these special influences, or, in other words, to eliminate chance; and if all these instances have occurred within such narrow limits of time that no material change can have taken place in the general influences constituting the state of civilisation of the country, we may be certain that if human actions are governed by invariable laws, the aggregate result will be something like a constant quantity. The number of murders committed within that space and time being the effect partly of general causes which have not varied, and partly of partial causes the whole round of whose variations has been included, will be, practically speaking, invariable.

Literally and mathematically invariable it is not, and could not be expected to be; because the period of a year is too short to include *all* the possible combinations of partial causes, while it is, at the same time, sufficiently long to make it probable that in some years, at least, of every series, there will have been introduced new influences of a more or less general character; such as a more vigorous or a more relaxed police; some temporary excitement from political or religious causes; or some incident generally notorious, of a nature to act morbidly on the imagination. That in spite of these unavoidable imperfections in the data, there should be so very trifling a margin of variation

in the annual results, is a brilliant confirmation of the general theory.

§ 2. The same considerations which thus strikingly corroborate the evidence of the doctrine that historical facts are the invariable effects of causes, tend equally to clear that doctrine from various misapprehensions, the existence of which has been put in evidence by the recent discussions. Some persons, for instance, seemingly imagine the doctrine to imply, not merely that the total number of murders committed in a given space and time is entirely the effect of the general circumstances of society, but that every particular murder is so too; that the individual murderer is, so to speak, a mere instrument in the hands of general causes; that he himself has no option, or, if he has, and chose to exercise it, some one else would be necessitated to take his place; that if any one of the actual murderers had abstained from the crime, some person who would otherwise have remained innocent would have committed an extra murder to make up the average. Such a corollary would certainly convict any theory which necessarily led to it of absurdity. It is obvious, however, that each particular murder depends, not on the general state of society only, but on that combined with causes special to the case, which are generally much more powerful; and if these special causes, which have greater influence than the general ones in causing every particular murder, have no influence on the number of murders in a given period, it is because the field of observation is so extensive as to include all possible combinations of the special causes — all varieties of individual character and individual temptation compatible with the general state of society. The collective experiment, as it may be termed, exactly separates the effect of the general from that of the special causes, and shows the net result of the former; but it declares nothing at all respecting the amount of influence of the special causes, be it greater or smaller, since the scale of the experiment

extends to the number of cases within which the effects of the special causes balance one another, and disappear in that of the general causes.

I will not pretend that all the defenders of the theory have always kept their language free from this same confusion, and have shown no tendency to exalt the influence of general causes at the expense of special. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that they have done so in a very great degree, and by so doing have encumbered their theory with difficulties, and laid it open to objections which do not necessarily affect it. Some, for example, (among whom is Mr. Buckle himself,) have inferred, or allowed it to be supposed that they inferred, from the regularity in the recurrence of events which depend on moral qualities, that the moral qualities of mankind are little capable of being improved, or are of little importance in the general progress of society, compared with intellectual or economic causes. But to draw this inference is to forget that the statistical tables from which the invariable averages are deduced were compiled from facts occurring within narrow geographical limits, and in a small number of successive years; that is, from a field the whole of which was under the operation of the same general causes, and during too short a time to allow of much change therein. All moral causes but those common to the country generally have been eliminated by the great number of instances taken; and those which are common to the whole country have not varied considerably in the short space of time comprised in the observations. If we admit the supposition that they have varied; if we compare one age with another, or one country with another, or even one part of a country with another, differing in position and character as to the moral elements, the crimes committed within a year give no longer the same, but a widely different numerical aggregate. And this cannot but be the case; for inasmuch as every single crime committed by an individual mainly depends on his moral qualities, the crimes committed by the entire population

of the country must depend in an equal degree on their collective moral qualities. To render this element inoperative upon the large scale it would be necessary to suppose that the general moral average of mankind does not vary from country to country, or from age to age; which is not true, and even if it were true, could not possibly be proved by any existing statistics. I do not on this account the less agree in the opinion of Mr. Buckle, that the intellectual element in mankind, including in that expression the nature of their beliefs, the amount of their knowledge, and the development of their intelligence, is the predominant circumstance in determining their progress. But I am of this opinion, not because I regard their moral or economical condition either as less powerful or less variable agencies, but because these are in a great degree the consequences of the intellectual condition, and are, in all cases, limited by it, as was observed in the preceding chapter. The intellectual changes are the most conspicuous agents in history, not from their superior force, considered in themselves, but because practically they work with the united power belonging to all three.[1]

[1] I have been assured by an intimate friend of Mr. Buckle that he would not have withheld his assent from these remarks, and that he never intended to affirm or imply that mankind are not progressive in their moral as well as in their intellectual qualities. "In dealing with his problem, he availed himself of the artifice resorted to by the Political Economist, who leaves out of consideration the generous and benevolent sentiments, and founds his science on the proposition that mankind are actuated by acquisitive propensities alone" not because such is the fact, but because it is necessary to begin by treating the principal influence as if it was the sole one, and make the due corrections afterwards. "He desired to make abstraction of the intellect as the determining and dynamical element of the progression, eliminating the more dependent set of conditions, and treating the more active one as if it were an entirely independent variable."

The same friend of Mr. Buckle states that when he used expressions which seemed to exaggerate the influence of general at the expense of special causes, and especially at the expense of the influence of individual minds, Mr. Buckle really intended no more than to affirm emphatically that the greatest men cannot effect great changes in human affairs unless the general mind has been in some considerable degree prepared for them by the general circumstances of the age; a truth which, of course, no one thinks of denying. And there certainly are passages in Mr. Buckle's writings which speak of the influence exercised by great individual intellects in as strong terms as could be desired.

§ 3. There is another distinction often neglected in the discussion of this subject, which it is extremely important to observe. The theory of the subjection of social progress to invariable laws is often held in conjunction with the doctrine that social progress cannot be materially influenced by the exertions of individual persons or by the acts of governments. But though these opinions are often held by the same persons, they are two very different opinions, and the confusion between them is the eternally recurring error of confounding Causation with Fatalism. Because whatever happens will be the effect of causes, human volitions among the rest, it does not follow that volitions, even those of peculiar individuals, are not of great efficacy as causes. If any one in a storm at sea, because about the same number of persons in every year perish by shipwreck, should conclude that it was useless for him to attempt to save his own life, we should call him a Fatalist, and should remind him that the efforts of shipwrecked persons to save their lives are so far from being immaterial, that the average amount of those efforts is one of the causes on which the ascertained annual number of deaths by shipwreck depend. However universal the laws of social development may be, they cannot be more universal or more rigorous than those of the physical agencies of nature; yet human will can convert these into instruments of its designs, and the extent to which it does so makes the chief difference between savages and the most highly civilised people. Human and social facts, from their more complicated nature, are not less, but more, modifiable than mechanical and chemical facts; human agency, therefore, has still greater power over them. And accordingly, those who maintain that the evolution of society depends exclusively, or almost exclusively, on general causes, always include among these the collective knowledge and intellectual development of the race. But if of the race, why not also of some powerful monarch or thinker, or of the ruling portion of some political society, acting through its govern-

ment? Though the varieties of character among ordinary individuals neutralise one another on any large scale, exceptional individuals in important positions do not in any given age neutralise one another; there was not another Themistocles, or Luther, or Julius Cæsar, of equal powers and contrary dispositions, who exactly balanced the given Themistocles, Luther, and Cæsar, and prevented them from having any permanent effect. Moreover, for aught that appears, the volitions of exceptional persons, or the opinions and purposes of the individuals who at some particular time compose a government, may be indispensable links in the chain of causation by which even the general causes produce their effects; and I believe this to be the only tenable form of the theory.

Lord Macaulay, in a celebrated passage of one of his early essays, (let me add that it was one which he did not himself choose to reprint,) gives expression to the doctrine of the absolute inoperativeness of great men, more unqualified, I should think, than has been given to it by any writer of equal abilities. He compares them to persons who merely stand on a loftier height, and thence receive the sun's rays a little earlier than the rest of the human race. "The sun illuminates the hills while it is still below the horizon, and truth is discovered by the highest minds a little before it becomes manifest to the multitude. This is the extent of their superiority. They are the first to catch and reflect a light which, without their assistance, must in a short time be visible to those who lie far beneath them."[1] If this metaphor is to be carried out, it follows that if there had been no Newton the world would not only have had the Newtonian system, but would have had it equally soon, as the sun would have risen just as early to spectators in the plain if there had been no mountain at hand to catch still earlier rays. And so it would be if truths, like the sun, rose by their own proper motion, without human effort, but not otherwise. I believe that if New-

[1] Essay on Dryden, in *Miscellaneous Writings*, i. 186.

ton had not lived, the world must have waited for the Newtonian philosophy until there had been another Newton or his equivalent. No ordinary man, and no succession of ordinary men, could have achieved it. I will not go the length of saying that what Newton did in a single life might not have been done in successive steps by some of those who followed him, each singly inferior to him in genius. But even the least of those steps required a man of great intellectual superiority. Eminent men do not merely see the coming light from the hill-top; they mount on the hill-top and evoke it; and if no one had ever ascended thither, the light, in many cases, might never have risen upon the plain at all. Philosophy and religion are abundantly amenable to general causes; yet few will doubt that had there been no Socrates, no Plato, and no Aristotle, there would have been no philosophy for the next two thousand years, not in all probability then; and that if there had been no Christ and no St. Paul, there would have been no Christianity.

The point in which, above all, the influence of remarkable individuals is decisive, is in determining the celerity of the movement. In most states of society it is the existence of great men which decides even whether there shall be any progress. It is conceivable that Greece, or that Christian Europe, might have been progressive in certain periods of their history through general causes only; but if there had been no Mahomet, would Arabia have produced Avicenna or Averroes, or Caliphs of Bagdad or of Cordova? In determining, however, in what manner and order the progress of mankind shall take place, if it take place at all, much less depends on the character of individuals. There is a sort of necessity established in this respect by the general laws of human nature, by the constitution of the human mind. Certain truths cannot be discovered or inventions made unless certain others have been made first; certain social improvements, from the nature of the case, can only follow, and not precede, others. The order of human progress, therefore,

may to a certain extent have definite laws assigned to it; while as to its celerity, or even as to its taking place at all, no generalisation, extending to the human species generally, can possibly be made, but only some very precarious approximate generalisations, confined to the small portion of mankind in whom there has been anything like consecutive progress within the historical period, and deduced from their special position, or collected from their particular history. Even looking to the *manner* of progress, the order of succession of social states, there is need of great flexibility in our generalisations. The limits of variation in the possible development of social, as of animal life, are a subject of which little is yet understood, and are one of the great problems in social science. It is, at all events, a fact that different portions of mankind, under the influence of different circumstances, have developed themselves in a more or less different manner and into different forms; and among these determining circumstances, the individual character of their great speculative thinkers or practical organisers may well have been one. Who can tell how profoundly the whole subsequent history of China may have been influenced by the individuality of Confucius? and of Sparta (and hence of Greece and the world) by that of Lycurgus?

Concerning the nature and extent of what a great man under favourable circumstances can do for mankind, as well as of what a government can do for a nation, many different opinions are possible; and every shade of opinion on these points is consistent with the fullest recognition that there are invariable laws of historical phenomena. Of course the degree of influence which has to be assigned to these more special agencies makes a great difference in the precision which can be given to the general laws, and in the confidence with which predictions can be grounded on them. Whatever depends on the peculiarities of individuals, combined with the accident of the positions they hold, is necessarily incapable of being foreseen. Undoubtedly, these casual

combinations might be eliminated like any others by taking a sufficiently large cycle: the peculiarities of a great historical character make their influence felt in history sometimes for several thousand years, but it is highly probable that they will make no difference at all at the end of fifty millions. Since, however, we cannot obtain an average of the vast length of time necessary to exhaust all the possible combinations of great men and circumstances, as much of the law of evolution of human affairs as depends upon this average is and remains inaccessible to us; and within the next thousand years, which are of considerably more importance to us than the whole remainder of the fifty millions, the favourable and unfavourable combinations which will occur will be to us purely accidental. We cannot foresee the advent of great men. Those who introduce new speculative thoughts or great practical conceptions into the world cannot have their epoch fixed beforehand. What science can do is this. It can trace through past history the general causes which had brought mankind into that preliminary state, which, when the right sort of great man appeared, rendered them accessible to his influence. If this state continues, experience renders it tolerably certain that in a longer or shorter period the great man will be produced, provided that the general circumstances of the country and people are (which very often they are not) compatible with his existence; of which point also science can in some measure judge. It is in this manner that the results of progress, except as to the celerity of their production, can be, to a certain extent, reduced to regularity and law. And the belief that they can be so is equally consistent with assigning very great, or very little efficacy, to the influence of exceptional men, or of the acts of governments. And the same may be said of all other accidents and disturbing causes.

§ 4. It would nevertheless be a great error to assign only a trifling importance to the agency of eminent individuals, or of

governments. It must not be concluded that the influence of either is small because they cannot bestow what the general circumstances of society, and the course of its previous history, have not prepared it to receive. Neither thinkers nor governments effect all that they intend, but in compensation they often produce important results which they did not in the least foresee. Great men and great actions are seldom wasted: they send forth a thousand unseen influences, more effective than those which are seen; and though nine out of every ten things done, with a good purpose, by those who are in advance of their age, produce no material effect, the tenth thing produces effects twenty times as great as any one would have dreamed of predicting from it. Even the men who for want of sufficiently favourable circumstances left no impress at all upon their own age have often been of the greatest value to posterity. Who could appear to have lived more entirely in vain than some of the early heretics? They were burnt or massacred, their writings extirpated, their memory anathematised, and their very names and existence left for seven or eight centuries in the obscurity of musty manuscripts — their history to be gathered, perhaps, only from the sentences by which they were condemned. Yet the memory of these men — men who resisted certain pretensions or certain dogmas of the Church in the very age in which the unanimous assent of Christendom was afterwards claimed as having been given to them, and asserted as the ground of their authority — broke the chain of tradition, established a series of precedents for resistance, inspired later Reformers with the courage, and armed them with the weapons, which they needed when mankind were better prepared to follow their impulse. To this example from men let us add another from governments. The comparatively enlightened rule of which Spain had the benefit during a considerable part of the eighteenth century did not correct the fundamental defects of the Spanish people; and in consequence, though it did great temporary good, so much of that good per-

ished with it, that it may plausibly be affirmed to have had no permanent effect. The case has been cited as a proof how little governments can do in opposition to the causes which have determined the general character of the nation. It does show how much there is which they cannot do; but not that they can do nothing. Compare what Spain was at the beginning of that half century of liberal government with what she had become at its close. That period fairly let in the light of European thought upon the more educated classes, and it never afterwards ceased to go on spreading. Previous to that time the change was in an inverse direction; culture, light, intellectual, and even material activity, were becoming extinguished. Was it nothing to arrest this downward and convert it into an upward course? How much that Charles the Third and Aranda could not do has been the ultimate consequence of what they did! To that half century Spain owes that she has got rid of the Inquisition, that she has got rid of the monks, that she now has parliaments and (save in exceptional intervals) a free press, and the feelings of freedom and citizenship, and is acquiring railroads and all the other constituents of material and economical progress. In the Spain which preceded that era, there was not a single element at work which could have led to these results in any length of time, if the country had continued to be governed as it was by the last princes of the Austrian dynasty, or if the Bourbon rulers had been from the first what, both in Spain and in Naples, they afterwards became.

And if a government can do much, even when it seems to have done little, in causing positive improvement, still greater are the issues dependent on it in the way of warding off evils, both internal and external, which else would stop improvement altogether. A good or a bad counsellor, in a single city at a particular crisis, has affected the whole subsequent fate of the world. It is as certain as any contingent judgment respecting historical events can be, that if there had been no Themistocles there would

have been no victory of Salamis; and had there not, where would have been all our civilisation? How different again would have been the issue if Epaminondas or Timoleon, or even Iphicrates, instead of Chares and Lysicles, had commanded at Chæroneia. As is well said in the second of two essays on the Study of History [1] — in my judgment the soundest and most philosophical productions which the recent controversies on this subject have called forth — historical science authorises not absolute, but only conditional predictions. General causes count for much, but individuals also "produce great changes in history, and colour its whole complexion long after their death. . . . No one can doubt that the Roman republic would have subsided into a military despotism if Julius Cæsar had never lived;" (thus much was rendered practically certain by general causes;) "but is it at all clear that in that case Gaul would ever have formed a province of the empire? Might not Varus have lost his three legions on the banks of the Rhone? and might not that river have become the frontier instead of the Rhine? This might well have happened if Cæsar and Crassus had changed provinces; and it is surely impossible to say that in such an event the venue (as lawyers say) of European civilisation might not have been changed. The Norman Conquest in the same way was as much the act of a single man as the writing of a newspaper article; and knowing as we do the history of that man and his family, we can retrospectively predict with all but infallible certainty that no other person" (no other in that age, I presume, is meant) "could have accomplished the enterprise. If it had not been accomplished, is there any ground to suppose that either our history or our national character would have been what they are?"

As is most truly remarked by the same writer, the whole stream of Grecian history, as cleared up by Mr. Grote, is one series of examples how often events on which the whole destiny

[1] In the *Cornhill Magazine* for June and July 1861.

of subsequent civilisation turned were dependent on the personal character for good or evil of some one individual. It must be said, however, that Greece furnishes the most extreme example of this nature to be found in history, and is a very exaggerated specimen of the general tendency. It has happened only that once, and will probably never happen again, that the fortunes of mankind depended upon keeping a certain order of things in existence in a single town, or a country scarcely larger than Yorkshire; capable of being ruined or saved by a hundred causes, of very slight magnitude in comparison with the general tendencies of human affairs. Neither ordinary accidents nor the characters of individuals can ever again be so vitally important as they then were. The longer our species lasts and the more civilised it becomes, the more, as Comte remarks, does the influence of past generations over the present, and of mankind *en masse* over every individual in it, predominate over other forces: and though the course of affairs never ceases to be susceptible of alteration both by accidents and by personal qualities, the increasing preponderance of the collective agency of the species over all minor causes is constantly bringing the general evolution of the race into something which deviates less from a certain and preappointed track. Historical science, therefore, is always becoming more possible; not solely because it is better studied, but because, in every generation, it becomes better adapted for study.

CIVIL LIBERTY[1]

John Stuart Mill

The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the Government. By liberty, was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest, who, at all events, did not hold

[1] *Essay on Liberty*, 1859; Introductory Chapter. A convenient edition of the *Essay on Liberty* may be found in the Camelot Series, published by Walter Scott.

it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying on the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots, was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks; by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort, supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and to attain this, or when already in some degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came, in the progress of human affairs, when

men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees, this new demand for elective and temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation of the power itself. *That* (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannising over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of which it could itself dictate the use to be made. Their power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which it still apparently predominates. Those who admit any limit to what a government may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it, had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of a usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised; and the "self-government" spoken of is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means, the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority: the people, consequently, *may* desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this, as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals, loses none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in

European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant — society collectively, over the separate individuals who compose it — its means of tyrannising are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

But though this proposition is not likely to be contested in general terms, the practical question, where to place the limit — how to make the fitting adjustment between individual inde-

pendence and social control — is a subject on which nearly everything remains to be done. All that makes existence valuable to any one, depends on the enforcement of restraints upon the actions of other people. Some rules of conduct, therefore, must be imposed, by law in the first place, and by opinion on many things which are not fit subjects for the operation of law. What these rules should be, is the principal question in human affairs; but if we except a few of the most obvious cases, it is one of those which least progress has been made in resolving. No two ages, and scarcely any two countries, have decided it alike; and the decision of one age or country is a wonder to another. Yet the people of any given age and country no more suspect any difficulty in it, than if it were a subject on which mankind had always been agreed. The rules which obtain among themselves appear to them self-evident and self-justifying. This all but universal illusion is one of the examples of the magical influence of custom, which is not only, as the proverb says, a second nature, but is continually mistaken for the first. The effect of custom, in preventing any misgiving respecting the rules of conduct which mankind impose on one another, is all the more complete because the subject is one on which it is not generally considered necessary that reasons should be given, either by one person to others, or by each to himself. People are accustomed to believe, and have been encouraged in the belief by some who aspire to the character of philosophers, that their feelings, on subjects of this nature, are better than reasons, and render reasons unnecessary. The practical principle which guides them to their opinions on the regulation of human conduct, is the feeling in each person's mind that everybody should be required to act as he, and those with whom he sympathises, would like them to act. No one, indeed, acknowledges to himself that his standard of judgment is his own liking; but an opinion on a point of conduct, not supported by reasons, can only count as one person's preference; and if the reasons, when given, are a mere appeal to a similar

preference felt by other people, it is still only many people's liking instead of one. To an ordinary man, however, his own preference, thus supported, is not only a perfectly satisfactory reason, but the only one he generally has for any of his notions of mortality, taste, or propriety, which are not expressly written in his religious creed; and his chief guide in the interpretation even of that. Men's opinions, accordingly, on what is laudable or blamable, are affected by all the multifarious causes which influence their wishes in regard to the conduct of others, and which are as numerous as those which determine their wishes on any other subject. Sometimes their reason — at other times their prejudices or superstitions: often their social affections, not seldom their anti-social ones, their envy or jealousy, their arrogance or contemptuousness: but most commonly, their desires or fears for themselves — their legitimate or illegitimate self-interest. Wherever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feelings of class superiority. The morality between Spartans and Helots, between planters and negroes, between princes and subjects, between nobles and roturiers, between men and women, has been for the most part the creation of these class interests and feelings: and the sentiments thus generated, react in turn upon the moral feelings of the members of the ascendant class, in the relations among themselves. Where, on the other hand, a class, formerly ascendant, has lost its ascendancy, or where its ascendancy is unpopular, the prevailing moral sentiments frequently bear the impress of an impatient dislike of superiority. Another grand determining principle of the rules of conduct, both in act and forbearance, which have been enforced by law or opinion, has been the servility of mankind towards the supposed preferences or aversions of their temporal masters, or of their gods. This servility, though essentially selfish, is not hypocrisy; it gives rise to perfectly genuine sentiments of abhorrence; it made men burn

magicians and heretics. Among so many baser influences, the general and obvious interests of society have of course had a share, and a large one, in the direction of the moral sentiments: less, however, as a matter of reason, and on their own account, than as a consequence of the sympathies and antipathies which grew out of them: and sympathies and antipathies which had little or nothing to do with the interests of society, have made themselves felt in the establishment of moralities with quite as great force.

The likings and dislikings of society, or of some powerful portion of it, are thus the main thing which has practically determined the rules laid down for general observance, under the penalties of law or opinion. And in general, those who have been in advance of society in thought and feeling have left this condition of things unassailed in principle, however they may have come into conflict with it in some of its details. They have occupied themselves rather in inquiring what things society ought to like or dislike, than in questioning whether its likings or dislikings should be a law to individuals. They preferred endeavouring to alter the feelings of mankind on the particular points on which they were themselves heretical, rather than make common cause in defence of freedom, with heretics generally. The only case in which the higher ground has been taken on principle and maintained with consistency, by any but an individual here and there, is that of religious belief: a case instructive in many ways, and not least so as forming a most striking instance of the fallibility of what is called the moral sense: for the *odium theologicum*, in a sincere bigot, is one of the most unequivocal cases of moral feeling. Those who first broke the yoke of what called itself the Universal Church, were in general as little willing to permit difference of religious opinion as that church itself. But when the heat of the conflict was over, without giving a complete victory to any party, and each church or sect was reduced to limit its hopes to retaining possession of the

ground it already occupied; minorities, seeing that they had no chance of becoming majorities, were under the necessity of pleading to those whom they could not convert, for permission to differ. It is accordingly on this battle-field, almost solely, that the rights of the individual against society have been asserted on broad grounds of principle, and the claim of society to exercise authority over dissentients, openly controverted. The great writers to whom the world owes what religious liberty it possesses, have mostly asserted freedom of conscience as an indefeasible right, and denied absolutely that a human being is accountable to others for his religious belief. Yet so natural to mankind is intolerance in whatever they really care about, that religious freedom has hardly anywhere been practically realised, except where religious indifference, which dislikes to have its peace disturbed by theological quarrels, has added its weight to the scale. In the minds of almost all religious persons, even in the most tolerant countries, the duty of toleration is admitted with tacit reserves. One person will bear with dissent in matters of church government, but not of dogma; another can tolerate everybody, short of a Papist or a Unitarian; another, every one who believes in revealed religion; a few extend their charity a little further, but stop at the belief in a God and in a future state. Wherever the sentiment of the majority is still genuine and intense, it is found to have abated little of its claim to be obeyed.

In England, from the peculiar circumstances of our political history, though the yoke of opinion is perhaps heavier, that of law is lighter, than in most other countries of Europe; and there is considerable jealousy of direct interference, by the legislative or the executive power, with private conduct; not so much from any just regard for the independence of the individual, as from the still subsisting habit of looking on the government as representing an opposite interest to the public. The majority have not yet learnt to feel the power of the government their power, or its opinions their opinions. When they do so, individual

liberty will probably be as much exposed to invasion from the government, as it already is from public opinion. But, as yet, there is a considerable amount of feeling ready to be called forth against any attempt of the law to control individuals in things in which they have not hitherto been accustomed to be controlled by it; and this with very little discrimination as to whether the matter is, or is not, within the legitimate sphere of legal control; insomuch that the feeling, highly salutary on the whole, is perhaps quite as often misplaced as well grounded in the particular instances of its application. There is, in fact, no recognised principle by which the propriety or impropriety of government interference is customarily tested. People decide according to their personal preferences. Some, whenever they see any good to be done, or evil to be remedied, would willingly instigate the government to undertake the business; while others prefer to bear almost any amount of social evil, rather than add one to the departments of human interests amenable to governmental control. And men range themselves on one or the other side in any particular case, according to this general direction of their sentiments; or according to the degree of interest which they feel in the particular thing which it is proposed that the government should do, or according to the belief they entertain that the government would, or would not, do it in the manner they prefer; but very rarely on account of any opinion to which they consistently adhere, as to what things are fit to be done by a government. And it seems to me that in consequence of this absence of rule or principle, one side is at present as often wrong as the other; the interference of government is, with about equal frequency, improperly invoked and improperly condemned.

The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the

sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood. Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury. For the same reason, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage. The early difficulties in the way of spontaneous progress are so great, that there is seldom any choice of means for overcoming them; and a ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedients that will attain an end, perhaps otherwise unattainable. Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement,

and the means justified by actually effecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one. But as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion (a period long since reached in all nations with whom we need here concern ourselves), compulsion, either in the direct form or in that of pains and penalties for non-compliance, is no longer admissible as a means to their own good, and justifiable only for the security of others.

It is proper to state that I forego any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract right, as a thing independent of utility. I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being. Those interests, I contend, authorise the subjection of individual spontaneity to external control, only in respect to those actions of each, which concern the interest of other people. If any one does an act hurtful to others, there is a *primâ facie* case for punishing him, by law, or, where legal penalties are not safely applicable, by general disapprobation. There are also many positive acts for the benefit of others, which he may rightfully be compelled to perform; such as, to give evidence in a court of justice; to bear his fair share in the common defence, or in any other joint work necessary to the interest of the society of which he enjoys the protection; and to perform certain acts of individual beneficence, such as saving a fellow-creature's life, or interposing to protect the defenceless against ill-usage, things which whenever it is obviously a man's duty to do, he may rightfully be made responsible to society for not doing. A person may cause evil to others not only by his ac-

tions but by his inaction, and in either case he is justly accountable to them for the injury. The latter case, it is true, requires a much more cautious exercise of compulsion than the former. To make any one answerable for doing evil to others, is the rule; to make him answerable for not preventing evil, is, comparatively speaking, the exception. Yet there are many cases clear enough and grave enough to justify that exception. In all things which regard the external relations of the individual, he is *de jure* amenable to those whose interests are concerned, and if need be, to society as their protector. There are often good reasons for not holding him to the responsibility; but these reasons must arise from the special expediencies of the case: either because it is a kind of case in which he is on the whole likely to act better, when left to his own discretion, than when controlled in any way in which society have it in their power to control him; or because the attempt to exercise control would produce other evils, greater than those which it would prevent. When such reasons as these preclude the enforcement of responsibility, the conscience of the agent himself should step into the vacant judgment seat, and protect those interests of others which have no external protection; judging himself all the more rigidly, because the case does not admit of his being made accountable to the judgment of his fellow-creatures.

But there is a sphere of action in which society, as distinguished from the individual, has, if any, only an indirect interest; comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or if it also affects others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and participation. When I say only himself, I mean directly, and in the first instance: for whatever affects himself, may affect others *through* himself; and the objection which may be grounded on this contingency, will receive consideration in the sequel. This, then, is the appropriate region of human liberty. It comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty

of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological. The liberty of expressing and publishing opinions may seem to fall under a different principle, since it belongs to that part of the conduct of an individual which concerns other people; but, being almost of as much importance as the liberty of thought itself, and resting in great part on the same reasons, is practically inseparable from it. Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of doing as we like, subject to such consequences as may follow: without impediment from our fellow-creatures, so long as what we do does not harm them, even though they should think our conduct foolish, perverse, or wrong. Thirdly, from this liberty of each individual, follows the liberty, within the same limits, of combination among individuals; freedom to unite, for any purpose not involving harm to others: the persons combining being supposed to be of full age, and not forced or deceived.

No society in which these liberties are not, on the whole, respected, is free, whatever may be its form of government; and none is completely free in which they do not exist absolute and unqualified. The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental and spiritual. Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest.

Though this doctrine is anything but new, and, to some persons, may have the air of a truism, there is no doctrine which stands more directly opposed to the general tendency of existing opinion and practice. Society has expended fully as much effort in the attempt (according to its lights) to compel people to con-

form to its notions of personal, as of social excellence. The ancient commonwealths thought themselves entitled to practise, and the ancient philosophers countenanced, the regulation of every part of private conduct by public authority, on the ground that the State had a deep interest in the whole bodily and mental discipline of every one of its citizens; a mode of thinking which may have been admissible in small republics surrounded by powerful enemies, in constant peril of being subverted by foreign attack or internal commotion, and to which even a short interval of relaxed energy and self-command might so easily be fatal, that they could not afford to wait for the salutary permanent effects of freedom. In the modern world, the greater size of political communities, and above all, the separation between spiritual and temporal authority (which placed the direction of men's consciences in other hands than those which controlled their worldly affairs), prevented so great an interference by law, in the details of private life; but the engines of moral repression have been wielded more strenuously against divergence from the reigning opinion in self-regarding, than even in social matters; religion, the most powerful of the elements which have entered into the formation of moral feeling, having almost always been governed either by the ambition of a hierarchy, seeking control over every department of human conduct, or by the spirit of Puritanism. And some of those modern reformers who have placed themselves in strongest opposition to the religions of the past, have been noway behind either churches or sects in their assertion of the right of spiritual domination: M. Comte, in particular, whose social system, as unfolded in his *Traité de Politique Positive*, aims at establishing (though by moral more than by legal appliances) a despotism of society over the individual, surpassing anything contemplated in the political ideal of the most rigid disciplinarian among the ancient philosophers.

Apart from the peculiar tenets of individual thinkers, there is also in the world at large an increasing inclination to stretch

unduly the powers of society over the individual, both by the force of opinion and even by that of legislation; and as the tendency of all the changes taking place in the world is to strengthen society, and diminish the power of the individual, this encroachment is not one of the evils which tend spontaneously to disappear, but, on the contrary, to grow more and more formidable. The disposition of mankind, whether as rulers or as fellow-citizens, to impose their own opinions and inclinations as a rule of conduct on others, is so energetically supported by some of the best and by some of the worst feelings incident to human nature, that it is hardly ever kept under restraint by anything but want of power; and as the power is not declining, but growing, unless a strong barrier of moral conviction can be raised against the mischief, we must expect, in the present circumstances of the world, to see it increase.

WHAT IS A UNIVERSITY[1]

John Henry Newman

(1801–1890)

[Cardinal Newman stands out among the Victorian prophets for his relation with the Oxford Movement in an age of religious unrest and for his quiet turning, after long self-scrutiny and in the face of the severest criticism, to the Church of Rome. The spell of Newman, whose tranquil and lovely prose reveals so little of the terrible self-questionings and so little of that loss of many friends who were as life to him, has been best described by Arnold in one of those perfect and too infrequent passages in which the austere apostle of culture gave way to his "lyrical" and his "intimate" mood in prose. The passage portrays Newman before he turned down a spiritual by-path which to Arnold seemed impossible. But the description is better than anything that any one could write to make vivid and comprehensible Newman as he always was, whether Anglican or Catholic.

"Forty years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, voices were in the air which haunt my memory still. Happy the man who in that susceptible season of youth hears such voices! they are a possession to him for ever. . . . The Name of Cardinal Newman is a great name to the imagination still. . . . Forty years ago he was in the very prime of life; he was close at hand to us at Oxford; he was preaching in St. Mary's pulpit every Sunday; he seemed about to transform and renew what was for us the most national and natural institution in the world, the Church of England. Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music, — subtle, sweet, mournful? I seem to hear him still, saying: 'After the fever of life, after wearinesses and sicknesses, fightings and despondings, languor and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the changes and chances of this troubled, unhealthy state, — at length comes death, at length the white throne of God, at length the beatific vision.' Or, if we followed him back to his seclusion at Littlemore, that dreary village by the London road, and to the house of retreat

[1] *The Office and Work of Universities*, 1856. Chapter II.

and the church which he built there, — a mean house such as Paul might have lived in when he was tent-making at Ephesus, a church plain and thinly sown with worshippers, — who could resist him there either, welcoming back to the severe joys of church-fellowship, and of daily worship and prayer, the firstlings of a generation which had well-nigh forgotten them? Again I seem to hear him: 'The season is chill and dark, and the breath of the morning is damp, and worshippers are few; but all this befits those who are by their profession penitents and mourners, watchers and pilgrims. More dear to them that loneliness, more cheerful that severity, and more bright that gloom, than all those aids and applications of luxury by which men nowadays attempt to make prayer less disagreeable to them. True faith does not covet comforts; they who realize that awful day, when they shall see Him face to face whose eyes are as a flame of fire, will as little bargain to pray pleasantly now as they will think of doing so then.'"

The first two of his essays which appear in this volume are thoroughly characteristic of Newman in their "apparent desultoriness," which gives a certain unique charm of informality to sketches which are really very carefully constructed. The third essay is unusually formal for Newman, but it is thoroughly characteristic in its brilliant and subtle use of analogy. The first essay, slightly the more formal of the two, is a skillful study in definition, and exemplifies, at the close, Newman's controversial vein, which was always adroit and gracious, disclaiming argument but in reality proceeding with kindly subtlety to undermine the prejudices of all opponents. It contains also many finely chiseled and memorable epigrammatic utterances, in the invention of which he was very fertile. The second essay shows effectively the ease and loveliness with which Newman can pass to and fro between homespun prose and a manner so full of color and so exalted that it becomes poetic without ever suggesting the hybrid form of "prose-poetry," and without ever a hitch or a jar or a suggestion of a "purple passage." The sentences, with their elaborate but subtly varied parallel structure, their fine combination of academic elegance and worldly affability, their vowel melodies now subdued and now sonorous, and their recurrent rise to a very stately and marked rhythm, are among the most perfect models in our language.]

If I were asked to describe as briefly and popularly as I could, what a University was, I should draw my answer from its ancient designation of a *Studium Generale*, or "School of Universal Learning." This description implies the assemblage of strangers from all parts in one spot; — *from all parts;* else, how will you find professors and students for every department of knowledge? and *in one spot;* else, how can there be any school at all? Accordingly, in its simple and rudi-

mental form, it is a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter. Many things are requisite to complete and satisfy the idea embodied in this description; but such a University seems to be in its essence a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country.

There is nothing far-fetched or unreasonable in the idea thus presented to us; and if this be a University, then a University does but contemplate a necessity of our nature, and is but one specimen in a particular department, out of many which might be adduced in others, of a provision for that necessity. Mutual education, in a large sense of the word, is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not. One generation forms another; and the existing generation is ever acting and reacting upon itself in the persons of its individual members. Now, in this process, books, I need scarcely say, that is, the *littera scripta*, are one special instrument. It is true; and emphatically so in this age. Considering the prodigious powers of the press, and how they are developed at this time in the never-intermitting issue of periodicals, tracts, pamphlets, works in series, and light literature, we must allow there never was a time which promised fairer for dispensing with every other means of information and instruction. What can we want more, you will say, for the intellectual education of the whole man, and for every man, than so exuberant and diversified and persevering a promulgation of all kinds of knowledge? Why, you will ask, need we go up to knowledge, when knowledge comes down to us? The Sibyl wrote her prophecies upon the leaves of the forest, and wasted them; but here such careless profusion might be prudently indulged, for it can be afforded without loss, in consequence of the almost fabulous fecundity of the instrument which these latter ages have invented. We have

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sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks; works larger and more comprehensive than those which have gained ancients an immortality, issue forth every morning, and are projected onwards to the ends of the earth at the rate of hundreds of miles a day. Our seats are strewed, our pavements are powdered, with swarms of little tracts; and the very bricks of our city walls preach wisdom, by largely informing us where we can at once cheaply purchase it.

I allow all this, and much more; such certainly is the popular education, and its effects are remarkable. Nevertheless, after all, even in this age, when men are really serious about getting what, in the language of trade, is called "a good article," when they aim at something precise, something refined, something really luminous, something really large, something choice, they go to another market; they avail themselves, in some shape or other, of the rival method, the ancient method, of oral instruction, of present communication between man and man, of teachers instead of teaching, of the personal influence of a master, and the humble initiation of a disciple, and, in consequence, of great centres of pilgrimage and throng, which such a method of education necessarily involves. This, I think, will be found good in all those departments or aspects of society, which possess an interest sufficient to bind men together, or to constitute what is called "a world." It holds in the political world, and in the high world, and in the religious world; and it holds also in the literary and scientific world.

If the actions of men may be taken as any test of their convictions, then we have reason for saying this, viz.; — that the province and the inestimable benefit of the *littera scripta* is that of being a record of truth, and an authority of appeal, and an instrument of teaching in the hands of a teacher; but that, if we wish to become exact and fully furnished in any subject of teaching which is diversified and complicated, we must consult the living man and listen to his living voice. I am not bound to

investigate the cause of this, and anything I may say will, I am conscious, be short of its full analysis; — perhaps we may suggest that no books can get through the number of minute questions which it is possible to ask on any extended subject, or hit upon the very difficulties which are respectively felt by each reader in succession. Or again, that no book can convey the special spirit and delicate peculiarities of its subject with that rapidity and certainty which attend on the sympathy of mind with mind, through the eyes, the look, the accent, and the manner, in casual expressions thrown off at the moment, and the unstudied turns of familiar conversation. But I am already dwelling too long on what is but an incidental portion of my main subject. Whatever be the cause, the fact is undeniable. The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already. You must imitate the student in French or German, who is not content with his grammar, but goes to Paris or Dresden; you must take example from the young artist, who aspires to visit the great Masters in Florence and in Rome. Till we have discovered some intellectual daguerreotype, which takes off the course of thought, and the form, lineaments, and features of truth, as completely and minutely as the optical instrument produces the sensible object, we must come to the teachers of wisdom to learn wisdom; we must repair to the fountain, and drink there. Portions may go from thence to the ends of the earth by means of books, but the fulness is in one place alone. It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.

The principle on which I have been insisting is so obvious, and instances in point so ready, that I should think it tiresome to proceed with the subject, except that one or two illustrations may serve to explain my own language about it, which may not

have been as clear as the subject on which it has been employed.

For instance, the polished manners and high-bred behaviour which are so difficult of attainment, and so strictly personal when attained, which are so much admired in society, from society are obtained. All that goes to constitute a gentleman, — the carriage, gait, address, gestures, voice; the ease, the self-possession, the courtesy, the power of conversing, the success in not offending; the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression, the taste and propriety, the generosity and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand; — these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity; but the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society? The very nature of the case leads us to say so; you cannot fence without an antagonist, nor challenge all comers in disputation before you have supported a thesis; and in like manner, it stands to reason, you cannot learn to converse till you have the world to converse with; you cannot unlearn your natural bashfulness, or awkwardness, or stiffness, or other besetting deformity, till you serve your time in some school of manners. Well, and is it not so in matter of fact? The metropolis, the court, the great houses of the land, are the centres to which at stated times the country comes up, as to shrines of refinement and good taste; and then in due time the country goes back again home, enriched with a portion of those social accomplishments which those very visits serve to call out and heighten in the gracious dispensers of them. We are unable to conceive how the "gentlemanlike" can otherwise be maintained; and maintained in this way it is.

And now a second instance, and here too I am going to speak without personal experience of the subject I am introducing. I

admit I have not been in Parliament, any more than I have figured in the *beau monde;* yet I cannot but think that statesmanship, as well as high breeding, is learned, not by books, but in certain centres of education. If it be not presumption to say so, Parliament puts a clever man *au courant* with politics and affairs of state in a way surprising to himself. A member of the Legislature, if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes, even though his views undergo no change. Words have a meaning now, and ideas a reality, such as they had not before. He hears a vast deal in public speeches and private conversation which is never put into print. The bearings of measures and events, the action of parties, and the persons of friends and enemies are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness which the most diligent perusal of newspapers will fail to throw around them. It is access to the fountain-heads of political wisdom and experience, it is daily intercourse, of one kind or another, with the multitude who go up to them, it is familiarity with business, it is access to the contributions of fact and opinion thrown together by many witnesses from any quarters, which does this for him. However, I need not account for a fact to which it is sufficient to appeal; that the Houses of Parliament and the atmosphere around them are a sort of University of politics.

As regards the world of science, we find a remarkable instance of the principle which I am illustrating, in the periodical meetings for its advance which have arisen in the course of the last twenty years, such as the British Association. Such gatherings would to many persons appear at first sight simply preposterous. Above all subjects of study, Science is conveyed, is propagated, by books, or by private teachings; experiments and investigations are conducted in silence; discoveries are made in solitude. What have philosophers to do with festive celebrities and panegyrical solemnities with mathematical and physical truth? Yet on a closer attention to the subject, it is found that not even

scientific thought can dispense with the suggestions, the instruction, the stimulus, the sympathy, the intercourse with mankind on a large scale, which such meetings secure. A fine time of year is chosen, when days are long, skies are bright, the earth smiles, and all nature rejoices; a city or town is taken by turns, of ancient name or modern opulence, where buildings are spacious and hospitality hearty. The novelty of place and circumstance, the excitement of strange, or the refreshment of well-known faces, the majesty of rank or of genius, the amiable charities of men pleased both with themselves and with each other; the elevated spirits, the circulation of thought, the curiosity; the morning sections, the outdoor exercise, the well-furnished, well-earned board, the not ungraceful hilarity, the evening circle; the brilliant lecture, the discussions or collisions or guesses of great men one with another, the narratives of scientific processes, of hopes, disappointments, conflicts, and successes, the splendid eulogistic orations; these and the like constituents of the annual celebration, are considered to do something real and substantial for the advance of knowledge which can be done in no other way. Of course they can but be occasional: they answer to the annual Act, or Commencement, or Commemoration of a University, not to its ordinary condition; but they are of a University nature; and I can well believe in their utility. They issue in the promotion of a certain living and, as it were, bodily communication of knowledge from one to another, of a general interchange of ideas, a comparison and adjustment of science, with science, of an enlargement of mind, intellectual and social, of an ardent love of the particular study which may be chosen by each individual, and a noble devotion to its interests.

Such meetings, I repeat, are but periodical, and only partially represent the idea of a University. The bustle and whirl which are their usual concomitants are in ill keeping with the order and gravity of earnest intellectual education. We desid-

erate the means of instruction without the interruption of our ordinary habits; nor need we seek it long, for the natural course of things brings it about, while we debate over it. In every great country, the metropolis itself becomes a sort of necessary University, whether we will or no. As the chief city is the seat of the court, of high society, of politics, and of law, so, as a matter of course, it is the seat of letters also; and at this time, for a long term of years, London and Paris are in fact and in operation Universities, though in Paris its famous University is no more, and in London a University scarcely exists except as a board of management. The newspapers, magazines, reviews, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, the publishing trade, the libraries, museums, and academies there found, the learned and scientific societies, necessarily invest it with the functions of a University; and that atmosphere of intellect, which in a former age hung over Oxford or Bologna or Salamanca, has, with the change of time, moved away to the centre of civil government. Thither come up youths from all parts of the country, the students of law, medicine, and the fine arts, and the *employés* and *attachés* of literature. There they live, as chance determines; and they are satisfied with their temporary home, for they find in it all that was promised to them there. They have not come in vain, as far as their own object in coming is concerned. They have not learned any particular religion, but they have learned their own particular profession well. They have, moreover, become acquainted with the habits, manners, and opinions of their place of sojourn, and done their part in maintaining the tradition of them. We cannot then be without virtual Universities; a metropolis is such: the simple question is, whether the education sought and given should be based on principle, formed upon rule, directed to the highest ends, or left to the random succession of masters and schools, one after another, with a melancholy waste of thought and an extreme hazard of truth.

Religious teaching itself affords us an illustration of our subject to a certain point. It does not indeed seat itself merely in centres of the world; this is impossible from the nature of the case. It is intended for the many, not the few; its subject-matter is truth necessary, not truth recondite and rare; but it concurs in the principle of a University so far as this, that its great instrument, or rather organ, has ever been that which nature prescribes in all education, the personal presence of a teacher or, in theological language, Oral Tradition. It is the living voice, the breathing form, the expressive countenance, which preaches, which catechises Truth, a subtle, invisible, manifold spirit, is poured into the mind of the scholar by his eyes and ears, through his affections, imagination, and reason; it is poured into his mind and is sealed up there in perpetuity, by propounding and repeating it, by questioning and requestioning, by correcting and explaining, by progressing, and then recurring to first principles, by all those ways which are implied in the word "catechising." In the first ages it was a work of long time; months, sometimes years, were devoted to the arduous task of disabusing the mind of the incipient Christian of its pagan errors, and of moulding it upon the Christian faith. The Scriptures indeed were at hand for the study of those who could avail themselves of them; but St. Irenæus does not hesitate to speak of whole races who had been converted to Christianity, without being able to read them. To be unable to read or write was in those times no evidence of want of learning: the hermits of the deserts were, in this sense of the word, illiterate; yet the great St. Antony, though he knew not letters, was a match in disputation for the learned philosophers who came to try him. Didymus again, the great Alexandrian theologian, was blind. The ancient discipline, called the *Disciplina Arcani*, involved the same principle. The more sacred doctrines of Revelation were not committed to books, but passed on by successive tradition. The doctrines of the Blessed Trinity and the

Eucharist appear to have been so handed down for some hundred years; and when at length reduced to writing, they have filled many folios, which after all have left much unsaid.

But I have said more than enough in illustration; I end as I began; — a University is a place of concourse, whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge. You cannot have the best of every kind everywhere; you must go to some great city or emporium for it. There you have all the choicest productions of nature and art all together, which you find each in its own separate place elsewhere. All the riches of the land, and of the world, are carried up thither; there are the best markets, and there the best workmen. It is the centre of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival skill, and the standard of things rare and precious. It is the place for seeing galleries of first-rate pictures, and for hearing wonderful voices and miraculous performers. It is the place for great preachers, great orators, great nobles, great statesmen. In the nature of things, greatness and unity go together; excellence implies a centre. Such, then, for the third or fourth time, is a University; I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions; in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is the place where the professor becomes eloquent, and a missionary and preacher of science, displaying it in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, treading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a

place which attracts the affections of the young by its fame, wins the judgment of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the memory of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation. It is this and a great deal more, and demands a somewhat better head and hand than mine to describe it well.

Such is it in its idea and in its purpose; such in good measure has it before now been in fact. Shall it ever be again? We are going forward in the strength of the Cross, under the patronage of Mary, in the name of Patrick, to attempt it.

SITE OF A UNIVERSITY[1]

John Henry Newman

If we would know what a University is, considered in its elementary idea, we must betake ourselves to the first and most celebrated home of European literature, and source of European civilisation, to the bright and beautiful Athens, — Athens, whose schools drew to her bosom, and then sent back again to the business of life, the youth of the Western World for a long thousand years. Seated on the verge of the continent, the city seemed hardly suited for the duties of a central metropolis of knowledge; yet, what it lost in convenience of approach, it gained in its neighbourhood to the traditions of the mysterious East, and in the loveliness of the region in which it lay. Hither, then, as to a sort of ideal land, where all archetypes of the great and the fair were found in substantial being, and all departments of truth explored, and all diversities of intellectual power exhibited, where taste and philosophy were majestically enthroned as in a royal court, where there was no sovereignty but that of mind, and no nobility but that of genius, where professors were rulers, and princes did homage; hither flocked continually from the very corners of the *orbis terrarum*, the many-tongued generation, just rising or just risen into manhood, to gain wisdom.

Pisistratus had in an early age discovered and nursed the infant genius of his people, and Cimon, after the Persian War, had given it a home. That war had established the naval supremacy of Athens; she had become an imperial state; and the

[1] *The Office and Work of Universities*, 1856. Chapter III.

Ionians, bound to her by the double chain of kindred and of subjection, were importing into her both their merchandise and their civilisation. The arts and philosophy of the Asiatic coast were easily carried across the sea, and there was Cimon, as I have said, with his ample fortune, ready to receive them with due honours. Not content with patronising their professors, he built the first of those noble porticos of which we hear so much in Athens, and he formed the groves which in process of time became the celebrated Academy. Planting is one of the most graceful, as in Athens it was one of the most beneficent, of employments. Cimon took in hand the wild wood, pruned and dressed it, and laid it out with handsome walks and welcome fountains. Nor, while hospitable to the authors of the city's civilisation, was he ungrateful to the instruments of her prosperity. His trees extended their cool, umbrageous branches over the merchants, who assembled in the Agora, for many generations.

Those merchants certainly had deserved that act of bounty; for all the while their ships had been carrying forth the intellectual fame of Athens to the Western World. Then commenced what may be called her University existence. Pericles, who succeeded Cimon both in the government and in the patronage of art, is said by Plutarch to have entertained the idea of making Athens the capital of federated Greece. In this he failed, but his encouragement of such men as Phidias and Anaxagoras led the way to her acquiring a far more lasting sovereignty over a far wider empire. Little understanding the sources of her own greatness, Athens would go to war: peace is the interest of a seat of commerce and the arts; but to war she went; yet to her, whether peace or war, it mattered not. The political power of Athens waned and disappeared; kingdoms rose and fell; centuries rolled away — they did but bring fresh triumphs to the City of the poet and the sage. There at length the swarthy Moor and Spaniard were seen to meet the blue-eyed

Gaul; and the Cappadocian, late subject of Mithridates, gazed without alarm at the haughty conquering Roman. Revolution after revolution passed over the face of Europe, as well as of Greece, but still she was there, — Athens, the city of mind, — as radiant, as splendid, as delicate, as young as ever she had been.

Many a more fruitful coast or isle is washed by the blue Ægean, many is the spot more beautiful or sublime to see, many the territory more ample; but there was one charm in Attica, which in the same perfection was nowhere else. The deep pastures of Arcadia, the plain of Argos, the Thessalian vale, these had not the gift; Bœotia, which lay to its immediate north, was notorious for its very want of it. The heavy atmosphere of that Bœotia might be good for vegetation, but it was associated in popular belief with the dulness of the Bœotian intellect: on the contrary, the special purity, elasticity, clearness, and salubrity of the air of Attica, fit concomitant and emblem of its genius, did that for it which earth did not; — it brought out every bright hue and tender shade of the landscape on which it was spread, and would have illuminated the face even of a more bare and rugged country.

A confined triangle, perhaps fifty miles its greatest length, and thirty its greatest breadth; two elevated rocky barriers, meeting at an angle; three prominent mountains, commanding the plain — Parnes, Pentelicus, and Hymettus; an unsatisfactory soil; some streams, not always full; — such is about the report which the agent of a London company would have made of Attica. He would report that the climate was mild; the hills were limestone; there was plenty of good marble; more pasture-land than at first survey might have been expected, sufficient certainly for sheep and goats; fisheries productive; silver mines once, but long since worked out; figs fair; oil first-rate; olives in profusion. But what he would not think of noting down was, that that olive-tree was so choice in nature and so noble in shape, that it excited a religious veneration;

and that it took so kindly to the light soil as to expand into woods upon the open plain, and to climb up and fringe the hills. He would not think of writing word to his employers, how that clear air, of which I have spoken, brought out, yet blended and subdued, the colours on the marble, till they had a softness and harmony, for all their richness, which in a picture looks exaggerated, yet is after all within the truth. He would not tell how that same delicate and brilliant atmosphere freshened up the pale olive, till the olive forgot its monotony, and its cheek glowed like the arbutus or beech of the Umbrian hills. He would say nothing of the thyme and thousand fragrant herbs which carpeted Hymettus; he would hear nothing of the hum of its bees; nor take much account of the rare flavour of its honey, since Gozo and Minorca were sufficient for the English demand. He would look over the Ægean from the height he had ascended; he would follow with his eye the chain of islands, which, starting from the Sunian headland, seemed to offer the fabled divinities of Attica, when they would visit their Ionian cousins, a sort of viaduct thereto across the sea: but this thought would not occur to him, nor any admiration of the dark violet billows with their white edges down below; nor of those graceful, fan-like jets of silver upon the rocks, which slowly rise aloft like water spirits from the deep, then shiver, and break, and spread, and shroud themselves, and disappear, in a soft mist of foam; nor of the gentle, incessant heaving and panting of the whole liquid plain; nor of the long waves, keeping steady time, like a line of soldiery, as they resound upon the hollow shore, — he would not deign to notice the restless living element at all, except to bless his stars that he was not upon it. Nor the distinct detail, nor the refined colouring, nor the graceful outline and roseate golden hue of the jutting crags, nor the bold shadows cast from Otus or Larium by the declining sun; — our agent of a mercantile firm would not value these matters even at a low figure. Rather we must turn for the sympathy we seek to yon

pilgrim student, come from a semi-barbarous land to that small corner of the earth, as to a shrine, where he might take his fill of gazing on those emblems and coruscations of invisible unoriginate perfection. It was the stranger from a remote province, from Britain or from Mauritania, to whom a scene so different from that of his chilly, woody swamps, or of his fiery choking sands, would have shown him in a measure what a real University must be, by holding out to him the sort of country which was its suitable home.

Nor was this all a University required, and found in Athens. No one, even there, could live on poetry. If the students at that famous place had nothing better than bright hues and soothing sounds, they would not have been able or disposed to turn their residence there to much account. Of course they must have the means of living, nay, in a certain sense, of enjoyment, if Athens was to be an Alma Mater at the time, or to remain afterwards a pleasant thought in their memory. And so they had: be it recollected Athens was a port, and a mart of trade, perhaps the first in Greece; and this was very much to the point, when a number of strangers were ever flocking to it, whose combat was to be with intellectual, not physical difficulties, and who claimed to have their bodily wants supplied, that they might be at leisure to set about furnishing their minds. Now, barren as was the soil of Attica, and bare the face of the country, yet it had only too many resources for an elegant, nay luxurious abode there. So abundant were the imports of the place, that it was a common saying that the productions, which were found singly elsewhere, were brought all together in Athens. Corn and wine, the staple of subsistence in such a climate, came from the isles of the Ægean; fine wool and carpeting from Asia Minor; slaves, as now, from the Euxine, and timber too; and iron and brass from the coasts of the Mediterranean. The Athenian did not condescend to manufactures himself, but encouraged them in others; and a population of foreigners caught at the

lucrative occupation both for home consumption and for exportation. Their cloth, and other textures for dress and furniture, and their hardware — for instance, armour — were in great request. Labour was cheap; stone and marble in plenty; and the taste and skill, which at first were devoted to public buildings, as temples and porticos, were in course of time applied to the mansions of public men. If nature did much for Athens, it is undeniable that art did much more.

Here some one will interrupt me with the remark: "By-the-bye, where are we, and whither are we going? — what has all this to do with a University? at least what has it to do with education? It is instructive doubtless; but still how much has it to do with your subject?" Now I beg to assure the reader that I am most conscientiously employed upon my subject, and I should have thought every one would have seen this; however, since the objection is made, I may be allowed to pause a while, and show distinctly the drift of what I have been saying, before I go farther. What has this to do with my subject! why, the question of the *site* is the very first that comes into consideration, when a *Studium Generale* is contemplated; for that site should be a liberal and noble one; who will deny it? All authorities agree in this, and very little reflection will be sufficient to make it clear. I recollect a conversation I once had on this very subject with a very eminent man. I was a youth of eighteen, and was leaving my University for the Long Vacation, when I found myself in company in a public conveyance with a middle-aged person, whose face was strange to me. However, it was the great academical luminary of the day, whom afterwards I knew very well. Luckily for me, I did not suspect it; and luckily too, it was a fancy of his, as his friends knew, to make himself on easy terms especially with stage-coach companions. So, what with my flippancy and his condescension, I managed to hear many things which were novel to me at the time; and one point which he was strong upon, and was evidently fond of,

was the material pomp and circumstance which should environ a great seat of learning. He considered it was worth the consideration of the Government, whether Oxford should not stand in a domain of its own. An ample range, say four miles in diameter, should be turned into wood and meadow, and the University should be approached on all sides by a magnificent park, with fine trees in groups and groves and avenues, and with glimpses and views of the fair city, as the traveller drew near it. There is nothing surely absurd in the idea, though it would cost a round sum to realise it. What has a better claim to the purest and fairest possessions of nature, than the seat of wisdom? So thought my coach companion; and he did but express the tradition of ages and the instinct of mankind.

For instance, take the great University of Paris. That famous school engrossed as its territory the whole south bank of the Seine, and occupied one half, and that the pleasanter half, of the city. King Louis had the island pretty well as his own — it was scarcely more than a fortification; and the north of the river was given over to the nobles and citizens to do what they could with its marshes; but the eligible south, rising from the stream, which swept around its base, to the fair summit of St. Genevieve, with its broad meadows, its vineyards and its gardens, and with the sacred elevation of Montmartre confronting it, all this was the inheritance of the University. There was that pleasant Pratum, stretching along the river's bank, in which the students for centuries took their recreation, which Alcuin seems to mention in his farewell verses to Paris, and which has given a name to the great Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés. For long years it was devoted to the purposes of innocent and healthy enjoyment; but evil times came on the University; disorder arose within its precincts, and the fair meadow became the scene of party brawls; heresy stalked through Europe, and, Germany and England no longer sending their contingent of students, a heavy debt was the con-

sequence to the academical body. To let their lands was the only resource left to them: buildings rose upon it, and spread along the green sod, and the country at length became town. Great was the grief and indignation of the doctors and masters when this catastrophe occurred. "A wretched sight," said the Proctor of the German nation, "a wretched sight, to witness the sale of that ancient manor, whither the muses were wont to wander for retirement and pleasure. Whither shall the youthful student now betake himself, what relief will he find for his eyes, wearied with intense reading, now that the pleasant stream is taken from him?" Two centuries and more have passed since this complaint was uttered, and time has shown that the outward calamity, which it recorded, was but the emblem of the great moral vicissitude which was to follow; till the institution itself has followed its green meadows, into the region of things which once were and now are not.

And in like manner, when they were first contemplating a University in Belgium, some centuries ago, "Many," says Lipsius, "suggested Mechlin, as an abode healthy and clean, but Louvain was preferred, as for other reasons, so because no city seemed, from the disposition of place and people, more suitable for learned leisure. Who will not approve the decision? Can a site be healthier or more pleasant? The atmosphere pure and cheerful; the spaces open and delightful; meadows, fields, vines, groves, nay, I may say a *rus in urbe*. Ascend and walk round the walls; what do you look down upon? Does not the wonderful and delightful variety smooth the brow and soothe the mind? You have corn, and apples, and grapes; sheep and oxen; and birds chirping or singing. Now carry your feet or your eyes beyond the walls; there are streamlets, the river meandering along; country-houses, convents, the superb fortress; copses or woods fill up the scene, and spots for simple enjoyment." And then he breaks out into poetry:

"Salvete Athenæ nostræ, Athenæ Belgicæ,
Te Gallus, te Germanus, et te Sarmata
Invisit, et Britannus, et te duplicis
Hispaniæ alumnus," etc.

Extravagant, then, and wayward as might be the thought of my learned coach companion, when, in the nineteenth century, he imagined, Norman-wise, to turn a score of villages into a park or pleasaunce, still, the waywardness of his fancy is excused by the justness of his principle; for certainly, such as he would have made it, a University ought to be. Old Antony-à-Wood, discoursing on the demands of a University, had expressed the same sentiment long before him; as Horace in ancient times, with reference to Athens itself, when he spoke of seeking truth "in the *groves* of Academe." And to Athens, as will be seen, Wood himself appeals, when he would discourse of Oxford. Among "those things which are required to make a University," he puts down —

"First, a good and pleasant site, where there is a wholesome and temperate constitution of the air; composed with waters, springs or wells, woods and pleasant fields; which being obtained, those commodities are enough to invite students to stay and abide there. As the Athenians in ancient times were happy for their conveniences, so also were the Britons, when by a remnant of the Grecians that came amongst them they or their successors selected such a place in Britain to plant a school or schools therein, which for its pleasant situation was afterwards called Bellositum or Bellosite, now Oxford, privileged with all those conveniences before mentioned."

By others the local advantages of that University have been more philosophically analysed — for instance, with a reference to its position in the middle of southern England; its situation on several islands in a broad plain, through which many streams flowed; the surrounding marshes, which, in times when it was needed, protected the city from invaders; its own strength as

a military position; its easy communication with London, nay, with the sea, by means of the Thames; while the London fortifications hindered pirates from ascending the stream, which all the time was so ready and convenient for a descent.

Alas! for centuries past that city has lost its prime honour and boast, as a servant and soldier of the Truth. Once named the second school of the Church, second only to Paris, the foster-mother of St. Edward, St. Richard, St. Thomas Cantilupe, the theatre of great intellects, of Scotus, the subtle Doctor, of Hales the irrefragable, of Occam the special, of Bacon the admirable, of Middleton the solid, and of Bradwardine the profound, Oxford has now lapsed to that level of mere human loveliness which, in its highest perfection, we admire in Athens. Nor would it have a place, now or hereafter, in these columns, nor would it occur to me to speak its name, except that, even in its sorrowful deprivation, it retains just so much of that outward lustre which, like the brightness on the prophet's face, ought to be a ray from an illumination within, as to afford me an illustration of the point on which I am engaged, viz., what should be the material dwelling-place and appearance, the local circumstances, and the secular concomitants of a great University. Pictures are drawn in tales of romance of spirits seemingly too beautiful in their fall to be really fallen, and the holy Pope at Rome, Gregory, in fact, and not in fiction, looked upon the blue eyes and golden hair of the fierce Saxon youth in the slave-market, and pronounced them Angels, not Angles; and the spell which this once loyal daughter of the Church still exercises upon the foreign visitor, even now when her true glory is departed, suggests to us how far more majestic, and more touching, how brimful of indescribable influence would be the presence of a University which was planted within, not without, Jerusalem — an influence potent as her truth is strong, wide as her way is world-wide, and growing, not lessening, by the extent of space over which its attraction would be exerted.

Let the reader then listen to the words of the last learned German, who has treated of Oxford, and judge for himself if they do not bear me out in what I have said of the fascination which the very face and smile of a University possess over those who come within its range.

"There is scarce a spot in the world," says Huber, "that bears an historical stamp so deep and varied as Oxford; where so many noble memorials of moral and material power, co-operating to an honourable end, meet the eye all at once. He who can be proof against the strong emotions which the whole aspect and genius of the place tend to inspire, must be dull, thoughtless, uneducated, or of very perverted views. Others will bear us witness, that, even side by side with the Eternal Rome, the Alma Mater of Oxford may be fitly named, as producing a deep, a lasting, and peculiar impression.

"In one of the most fertile districts of the Queen of the Seas, whom nature has so richly blessed, whom for centuries past no footstep of foreign armies has desecrated, lies a broad green vale, where the Cherwell and the Isis mingle their full, clear waters. Here and there primeval elms and oaks overshadow them; while in their various windings they encircle gardens, meadows, and fields, villages, cottages, farmhouses, and country-seats, in motley mixture. In the midst rises a mass of mighty buildings, the general character of which varies between convent, palace, and castle. Some few Gothic church-towers and Romaic domes, it is true, break through the horizontal lines; yet the general impression at a distance and at first sight is essentially different from that of any of the towns of the middle ages. The outlines are far from being so sharp, so angular, so irregular, so fantastical; a certain softness, a peculiar repose, reigns in those broader, terrace-like rising masses. Only in the creations of Claude Lorraine or Poussin could we expect to find a spot to compare with the prevailing character of this picture, especially when lit up by a favourable light. The principal masses consist

of Colleges, the University buildings, and the city churches; and by the side of these the city itself is lost on distant view. But on entering the streets, we find around us all the signs of an active and prosperous trade. Rich and elegant shops in profusion afford a sight to be found nowhere but in England; but, with all this glitter and show, they sink into a modest, and, as it were, a menial attitude, by the side of the grandly severe memorials of the higher intellectual life, memorials which have been growing out of that life from almost the beginning of Christianity itself. Those rich and elegant shops are, as it were, the domestic offices of these palaces of learning which ever rivet the eye of the observer, while all besides seems perforce to be subservient to them. Each of the larger and more ancient Colleges looks like a separate whole — an entire town, whose walls and monuments proclaim the vigorous growth of many centuries; and the town itself has happily escaped the lot of modern beautifying, and in this respect harmonises with the Colleges."

There are those who, having felt the influence of this ancient school, and being smit with its splendour and its sweetness, ask wistfully if never again it is to be Catholic, or whether at least some footing for Catholicity may not be found there? All honour and merit to the charitable and zealous hearts who so inquire! Nor can we dare to tell what in time to come may be the inscrutable purposes of that grace which is ever more comprehensive than human hope and aspiration. But for me, from the day I left its walls, I never, for good or bad, have had anticipation of its future; and never for a moment have I had a wish to see again a place which I have never ceased to love, and where I lived for nearly thirty years. Nay, looking at the general state of things at this day, I desiderate for a school of the Church, if an additional school is to be granted to us, a more central position than Oxford has to show. Since the age of Alfred and of the first Henry, the world has grown from the west

and south of Europe, into four or five continents; and I look for a city less inland than that old sanctuary, and a country closer upon the highway of the seas. I look towards a land both old and young; old in its Christianity, young in the promise of its future: a nation which received grace before the Saxon came to Britain, and which has never quenched it: a Church which comprehends in its history the rise and fall of Canterbury and York, which Augustine and Paulinus found, and Pole and Fisher left behind them. I contemplate a people which has had a long night, and will have an inevitable day. I am turning my eyes towards a hundred years to come, and I dimly see the island I am gazing on become the road of passage and union between two hemispheres, and the centre of the world. I see its inhabitants rival Belgium in populousness, France in vigour, and Spain in enthusiasm; and I see England taught by advancing years to exercise in its behalf that good sense which is her characteristic towards every one else. The capital of that prosperous and hopeful land is situate in a beautiful bay and near a romantic region; and in it I see a flourishing University, which for a while had to struggle with fortune, but which, when its first founders and servants were dead and gone, had successes far exceeding their anxieties. Thither, as to a sacred soil, the home of their fathers, and the fountain-head of their Christianity, students are flocking from East, West, and South, from America and Australia and India, from Egypt and Asia Minor, with the ease and rapidity of a locomotion not yet discovered, and last, though not least, from England — all speaking one tongue, all owning one faith, all eager for one large true wisdom; and thence, when their stay is over, going back again to carry peace to men of good will over all the earth.

KNOWLEDGE VIEWED IN RELATION TO PROFESSIONAL SKILL[1]

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

I

I HAVE been insisting, in my two preceding Discourses, first, on the cultivation of the intellect, as an end which may reasonably be pursued for its own sake; and next, on the nature of that cultivation, or what that cultivation consists in. Truth of whatever kind is the proper object of the intellect; its cultivation then lies in fitting it to apprehend and contemplate truth. Now the intellect in its present state, with exceptions which need not here be specified, does not discern truth intuitively, or as a whole. We know, not by a direct and simple vision, not at a glance, but, as it were, by piecemeal and accumulation, by a mental process, by going round an object, by the comparison, the combination, the mutual correction, the continual adaptation, of many partial notions, by the employment, concentration, and joint action of many faculties and exercises of mind. Such a union and concert of the intellectual powers, such an enlargement and development, such a comprehensiveness, is necessarily a matter of training. And again, such a training is a matter of rule; it is not mere application, however exemplary, which introduces the mind to truth, nor the reading many books, nor the getting up many subjects, nor the witnessing many experiments, nor the attending many lectures. All this is short of enough; a man may have done it all, yet be lingering in the

[1] Discourse vii in *The Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated*, 1854.

vestibule of knowledge: — he may not realize what his mouth utters; he may not see with his mental eye what confronts him; he may have no grasp of things as they are; or at least he may have no power at all of advancing one step forward of himself, in consequence of what he has already acquired, no power of discriminating between truth and falsehood, of sifting out the grains of truth from the mass, of arranging things according to their real value, and, if I may use the phrase, of building up ideas. Such a power is the result of a scientific formation of mind; it is an acquired faculty of judgment, of clear-sightedness, of sagacity, of wisdom, of philosophical reach of mind, and of intellectual self-possession and repose, — qualities which do not come of mere acquirement. The bodily eye, the organ for apprehending material objects, is provided by nature; the eye of the mind, of which the object is truth, is the work of discipline and habit.

This process of training, by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called Liberal Education; and though there is no one in whom it is carried as far as is conceivable, or whose intellect would be a pattern of what intellects should be made, yet there is scarcely any one but may gain an idea of what real training is, and at least look towards it, and make its true scope and result, not something else, his standard of excellence; and numbers there are who may submit themselves to it, and secure it to themselves in good measure. And to set forth the right standard, and to train according to it, and to help forward all students towards it according to their various capacities, this I conceive to be the business of a University.

2

Now this is what some great men are very slow to allow; they insist that Education should be confined to some particular and

narrow end, and should issue in some definite work, which can be weighed and measured. They argue as if every thing, as well as every person, had its price; and that where there has been a great outlay, they have a right to expect a return in kind. This they call making Education and Instruction "useful," and "Utility" becomes their watchword. With a fundamental principle of this nature, they very naturally go on to ask, what there is to show for the expense of a University; what is the real worth in the market of the article called "a Liberal Education," on the supposition that it does not teach us definitely how to advance our manufactures, or to improve our lands, or to better our civil economy; or again, if it does not at once make this man a lawyer, that an engineer, and that a surgeon; or at least if it does not lead to discoveries in chemistry, astronomy, geology, magnetism, and science of every kind.

This question, as might have been expected, has been keenly debated in the present age, and formed one main subject of the controversy, to which I referred in the Introduction to the present Discourses, as having been sustained in the first decade of this century by a celebrated Northern Review on the one hand, and defenders of the University of Oxford on the other. Hardly had the authorities of that ancient seat of learning, waking from their long neglect, set on foot a plan for the education of the youth committed to them, than the representatives of science and literature in the city, which has sometimes been called the Northern Athens, remonstrated, with their gravest arguments and their most brilliant satire, against the direction and shape which the reform was taking. Nothing would content them, but that the University should be set to rights on the basis of the philosophy of Utility; a philosophy, as they seem to have thought, which needed but to be proclaimed in order to be embraced. In truth, they were little aware of the depth and force of the principles on which the academical authorities were proceeding, and, this being so, it was not to be expected that they

would be allowed to walk at leisure over the field of controversy which they had selected. Accordingly they were encountered in behalf of the University by two men of great name and influence in their day, of very different minds, but united, as by Collegiate ties, so in the clear-sighted and large view which they took of the whole subject of Liberal Education; and the defence thus provided for the Oxford studies has kept its ground to this day.

3

Let me be allowed to devote a few words to the memory of distinguished persons, under the shadow of whose name I once lived, and by whose doctrine I am now profiting. In the heart of Oxford there is a small plot of ground, hemmed in by public thoroughfares, which has been the possession and the home of one Society for about five hundred years. In the old time of Boniface the Eighth and John the Twenty-second, in the age of Scotus and Occam and Dante, before Wiclif or Huss had kindled those miserable fires which are still raging to the ruin of the highest interests of man, an unfortunate king of England, Edward the Second, flying from the field of Bannockburn, is said to have made a vow to the Blessed Virgin to found a religious house in her honour, if he got back in safety. Prompted and aided by his Almoner, he decided on placing this house in the city of Alfred; and the Image of our Lady, which is opposite its entrance-gate, is to this day the token of the vow and its fulfilment. King and Almoner have long been in the dust, and strangers have entered into their inheritance, and their creed has been forgotten, and their holy rites disowned; but day by day a memento is still made in the holy Sacrifice by at least one Catholic Priest, once a member of that College, for the souls of those Catholic benefactors who fed him there for so many years. The visitor, whose curiosity has been excited by its present fame, gazes perhaps with something of disappointment on a collection of buildings which have with them so few of the circumstances

of dignity or wealth. Broad quadrangles, high halls and chambers, ornamented cloisters, stately walks, or umbrageous gardens, a throng of students, ample revenues, or a glorious history, none of these things were the portion of that old Catholic foundation; nothing in short which to the common eye sixty years ago would have given tokens of what it was to be. But it had at that time a spirit working within it, which enabled its inmates to do, amid its seeming insignificance, what no other body in the place could equal; not a very abstruse gift or extraordinary boast, but a rare one, the honest purpose to administer the trust committed to them in such a way as their conscience pointed out as best. So, whereas the Colleges of Oxford are self-electing bodies, the fellows in each perpetually filling up for themselves the vacancies which occur in their number, the members of this foundation determined, at a time when, either from evil custom or from ancient statute, such a thing was not known elsewhere, to throw open their fellowships to the competition of all comers, and, in the choice of associates henceforth, to cast to the winds every personal motive and feeling, family connexion, and friendship, and patronage, and political interest, and local claim, and prejudice, and party jealousy, and to elect solely on public and patriotic grounds. Nay, with a remarkable independence of mind, they resolved that even the table of honours, awarded to literary merit by the University in its new system of examination for degrees, should not fetter their judgment as electors; but that at all risks, and whatever criticism it might cause, and whatever odium they might incur, they would select the men, whoever they were, to be children of their Founder, whom they thought in their consciences to be most likely from their intellectual and moral qualities to please him, if (as they expressed it) he were still upon earth, most likely to do honour to his College, most likely to promote the objects which they believed he had at heart. Such persons did not promise to be the disciples of a low Utilitarianism; and consequently, as their

collegiate reform synchronized with that reform of the Academical body, in which they bore a principal part, it was not unnatural that, when the storm broke upon the University from the North, their Alma Mater, whom they loved, should have found her first defenders within the walls of that small College, which had first put itself into a condition to be her champion.

These defenders, I have said, were two, of whom the more distinguished was the late Dr. Copleston, then a Fellow of the College, successively its Provost, and Protestant Bishop of Llandaff. In that Society, which owes so much to him, his name lives, and ever will live, for the distinction which his talents bestowed on it, for the academical importance to which he raised it, for the generosity of spirit, the liberality of sentiment, and the kindness of heart, with which he adorned it, and which even those who had least sympathy with some aspects of his mind and character could not but admire and love. Men come to their meridian at various periods of their lives; the last years of the eminent person I am speaking of were given to duties which, I am told, have been the means of endearing him to numbers, but which afforded no scope for that peculiar vigour and keenness of mind which enabled him, when a young man, single-handed, with easy gallantry, to encounter and overthrow the charge of three giants of the North combined against him. I believe I am right in saying that, in the progress of the controversy, the most scientific, the most critical, and the most witty, of that literary company, all of them now, as he himself, removed from this visible scene, Professor Playfair, Lord Jeffrey, and the Rev. Sydney Smith, threw together their several efforts into one article of their Review, in order to crush and pound to dust the audacious controvertist who had come out against them in defence of his own Institutions. To have even contended with such men was a sufficient voucher for his ability, even before we open his pamphlets, and have actual evidence of the good sense, the spirit, the scholar-like taste, and the purity of style, by which they are distinguished.

He was supported in the controversy, on the same general principles, but with more of method and distinctness, and, I will add, with greater force and beauty and perfection, both of thought and of language, by the other distinguished writer, to whom I have already referred, Mr. Davison; who, though not so well known to the world in his day, has left more behind him than the Provost of Oriel, to make his name remembered by posterity. This thoughtful man, who was the admired and intimate friend of a very remarkable person, whom, whether he wish it or not, numbers revere and love as the first author of the subsequent movement in the Protestant Church towards Catholicism, this grave and philosophical writer, whose works I can never look into without sighing that such a man was lost to the Catholic Church, as Dr. Butler before him, by some early bias or some fault of self-education — he, in a review of a work by Mr. Edgeworth on Professional Education, which attracted a good deal of attention in its day, goes leisurely over the same ground, which had already been rapidly traversed by Dr. Copleston, and, though professedly employed upon Mr. Edgeworth, is really replying to the northern critic who had brought that writer's work into notice, and to a far greater author than either of them, who in a past age had argued on the same side.

4

The author to whom I allude is no other than Locke. That celebrated philosopher has preceded the Edinburgh Reviewers in condemning the ordinary subjects in which boys are instructed in school, on the ground that they are not needed by them in after life; and before quoting what his disciples have said in the present century, I will refer to a few passages of the master. "'Tis matter of astonishment," he says in his work on Education, "that men of quality and parts should suffer themselves to be so far misled by custom and implicit faith. Reason, if consulted with, would advise, that their children's time should be spent in

acquiring what might be *useful* to them, when they come to be men, rather than that their heads should be stuffed with a deal of trash, a great part whereof they usually never do ('tis certain they never need to) think on again as long as they live; and so much of it as does stick by them they are only the worse for."

And so again, speaking of verse-making, he says, "I know not what reason a father can have to wish his son a poet, who does not desire him to *bid defiance to all other callings and business;* which is not yet the worst of the case; for, if he proves a successful rhymer, and gets once the reputation of a wit, I desire it to be considered, what company and places he is likely to spend his time in, nay, and estate too; for it is very seldom seen that any one discovers *mines of gold or silver in Parnassus.* 'Tis a pleasant air, but a barren soil."

In another passage he distinctly limits utility in education to its bearing on the future profession or trade of the pupil, that is, he scorns the idea of any education of the intellect, simply as such. "Can there be any thing more ridiculous," he asks, "than that a father should waste his own money, and his son's time, in setting him to *learn the Roman language,* when at the same time he *designs him for a trade,* wherein he, having no use of Latin, fails not to forget that little which he brought from school, and which 'tis ten to one he abhors for the ill-usage it procured him? Could it be believed, unless we have every where amongst us examples of it, that a child should be forced to learn the rudiments of a language, which *he is never to use in the course of life that he is designed to,* and neglect all the while the writing a good hand, and casting accounts, which are of great advantage in all conditions of life, and to more trades indispensably necessary?" Nothing of course can be more absurd than to neglect in education those matters which are necessary for a boy's future calling; but the tone of Locke's remarks evidently implies more than this, and is condemnatory of any teaching which tends to the general cultivation of the mind.

Now to turn to his modern disciples. The study of the Classics had been made the basis of the Oxford education, in the reforms which I have spoken of, and the Edinburgh Reviewers protested, after the manner of Locke, that no good could come of a system which was not based upon the principle of Utility.

"Classical Literature," they said, "is the great object at Oxford. Many minds, so employed, have produced many works and much fame in that department; but if all liberal arts and sciences, *useful to human life*, had been taught there, if *some* had dedicated themselves to *chemistry*, *some* to *mathematics*, *some* to *experimental philosophy*, and if *every* attainment had been honoured in the mixt ratio of its difficulty and *utility*, the system of such a University would have been much more valuable, but the splendour of its name something less."

Utility may be made the end of education, in two respects: either as regards the individual educated, or the community at large. In which light do these writers regard it? in the latter. So far they differ from Locke, for they consider the advancement of science as the supreme and real end of a University. This is brought into view in the sentences which follow.

"When a University has been doing *useless* things for a long time, it appears at first degrading to them to be *useful*. A set of Lectures on Political Economy would be discouraged in Oxford, probably despised, probably not permitted. To discuss the inclosure of commons, and to dwell upon imports and exports, to come so near to common life, would seem to be undignified and contemptible. In the same manner, the Parr or the Bentley of the day would be scandalized, in a University, to be put on a level with the discoverer of a neutral salt; and yet, *what other measure is there of dignity in intellectual labour but usefulness?* And what ought the term University to mean, but a place where every science is taught which is liberal, and at the same time useful to mankind? Nothing would so much tend to bring classical literature within proper bounds as *a steady and invariable appeal*

to utility in our appreciation of all human knowledge. . . . *Looking always to real utility as our guide*, we should see, with equal pleasure, a studious and inquisitive mind arranging the productions of nature, investigating the qualities of bodies, or mastering the difficulties of the learned languages. We should not care whether he was chemist, naturalist, or scholar, because we know it to be as *necessary* that matter should be studied and subdued *to the use of man*, as that taste should be gratified, and imagination inflamed."

Such then is the enunciation, as far as words go, of the theory of Utility in Education; and both on its own account, and for the sake of the able men who have advocated it, it has a claim on the attention of those whose principles I am here representing. Certainly it is specious to contend that nothing is worth pursuing but what is useful; and that life is not long enough to expend upon interesting, or curious, or brilliant trifles. Nay, in one sense, I will grant it is more than specious, it is true; but, if so, how do I propose directly to meet the objection? Why, Gentlemen, I have really met it already, viz., in laying down, that intellectual culture is its own end; for what has its *end* in itself, has its *use* in itself also. I say, if a Liberal Education consists in the culture of the intellect, and if that culture be in itself a good, here, without going further, is an answer to Locke's question; for if a healthy body is a good in itself, why in not a healthy intellect? and if a College of Physicians is a useful institution, because it contemplates bodily health, why is not an Academical Body, though it were simply and solely engaged in imparting vigour and beauty and grasp to the intellectual portion of our nature? And the Reviewers I am quoting seem to allow this in their better moments, in a passage which, putting aside the question of its justice in fact, is sound and true in the principles to which it appeals: —

"The present state of classical education," they say, "cultivates the *imagination* a great deal too much, and other *habits of*

mind a great deal too little, and trains up many young men in a style of elegant imbecility, utterly unworthy of the talents with which nature has endowed them. . . . The matter of fact is, that a classical scholar of twenty-three or twenty-four is a man principally conversant with works of imagination. His feelings are quick, his fancy lively, and his taste good. Talents for *speculation* and *original inquiry* he has none, nor has he formed the invaluable *habit of pushing things up to their first principles*, or of collecting dry and unamusing facts as the materials for reasoning. All the solid and masculine parts of his *understanding* are left wholly without *cultivation;* he hates the pain of thinking, and suspects every man whose boldness and originality call upon him to defend his opinions and prove his assertions."

5

Now, I am not at present concerned with the specific question of classical education; else, I might reasonably question the justice of calling an intellectual discipline, which embraces the study of Aristotle, Thucydides, and Tacitus, which involves Scholarship and Antiquities, *imaginative;* still so far I readily grant, that the cultivation of the "understanding," of a "talent for speculation and original inquiry," and of "the habit of pushing things up to their first principles," is a principal portion of a *good* or *liberal* education. If then the Reviewers consider such cultivation the characteristic of a *useful* education, as they seem to do in the foregoing passage, it follows, that what they mean by "useful" is just what I mean by "good" or "liberal": and Locke's question becomes a verbal one. Whether youths are to be taught Latin or verse-making will depend on the *fact*, whether these studies tend to mental culture; but, however this is determined, so far is clear, that in that mental culture consists what I have called a liberal or non-professional, and what the Reviewers call a useful education.

This is the obvious answer which may be made to those who

urge upon us the claims of Utility in our plans of Education; but I am not going to leave the subject here: I mean to take a wider view of it. Let us take "useful," as Locke takes it, in its proper and popular sense, and then we enter upon a large field of thought, to which I cannot do justice in one Discourse, though to-day's is all the space that I can give to it. I say, let us take "useful" to mean, not what is simply good, but what *tends* to good, or is the *instrument* of good; and in this sense also, Gentlemen, I will show you how a liberal education is truly and fully a useful, though it be not a professional, education. "Good" indeed means one thing, and "useful" means another; but I lay it down as a principle, which will save us a great deal of anxiety, that, though the useful is not always good, the good is always useful. Good is not only good, but reproductive of good; this is one of its attributes; nothing is excellent, beautiful, perfect, desirable for its own sake, but it overflows, and spreads the likeness of itself all around it. Good is prolific; it is not only good to the eye, but to the taste; it not only attracts us, but it communicates itself; it excites first our admiration and love, then our desire and our gratitude, and that, in proportion to its intenseness and fulness in particular instances. A great good will impart great good. If then the intellect is so excellent a portion of us, and its cultivation so excellent, it is not only beautiful, perfect, admirable, and noble in itself, but in a true and high sense it must be useful to the possessor and to all around him; not useful in any low, mechanical, mercantile sense, but as diffusing good, or as a blessing, or a gift, or power, or a treasure, first to the owner, then through him to the world. I say then, if a liberal education be good, it must necessarily be useful too.

6

You will see what I mean by the parallel of bodily health. Health is a good in itself, though nothing came of it, and is especially worth seeking and cherishing; yet, after all, the blessings

which attend its presence are so great, while they are so close to it and so redound back upon it and encircle it, that we never think of it except as useful as well as good, and praise and prize it for what it does, as well as for what it is, though at the same time we cannot point out any definite and distinct work or production which it can be said to effect. And so as regards intellectual culture, I am far from denying utility in this large sense as the end of Education, when I lay it down, that the culture of the intellect is a good in itself and its own end; I do not exclude from the idea of intellectual culture what it cannot but be, from the very nature of things; I only deny that we must be able to point out, before we have any right to call it useful, some art, or business, or profession or trade, or work, as resulting from it, and as its real and complete end. The parallel is exact: — As the body may be sacrificed to some manual or other toil, whether moderate or oppressive, so may the intellect be devoted to some specific profession; and I do not call *this* the culture of the intellect. Again, as some member or organ of the body may be inordinately used and developed, so may memory, or imagination, or the reasoning faculty; and *this* again is not intellectual culture. On the other hand, as the body may be tended, cherished, and exercised with a simple view to its general health, so may the intellect also be generally exercised in order to its perfect state; and this *is* its cultivation.

Again, as health ought to precede labour of the body, and as a man in health can do what an unhealthy man cannot do, and as of this health the properties are strength, energy, agility, graceful carriage and action, manual dexterity, and endurance of fatigue, so in like manner general culture of mind is the best aid to professional and scientific study, and educated men can do what illiterate cannot; and the man who has learned to think and to reason and to compare and to discriminate and to analyze, who has refined his taste, and formed his judgment, and sharpened his mental vision, will not indeed at once be a lawyer, or a pleader,

or an orator, or a statesman, or a physician, or a good landlord, or a man of business, or a soldier, or an engineer, or a chemist, or a geologist, or an antiquarian, but he will be placed in that state of intellect in which he can take up any one of the sciences or callings I have referred to, or any other for which he has a taste or special talent, with an ease, a grace, a versatility, and a success, to which another is a stranger. In this sense then, and as yet I have said but a very few words on a large subject, mental culture is emphatically *useful*.

If then I am arguing, and shall argue, against Professional or Scientific knowledge as the sufficient end of a University Education, let me not be supposed, Gentlemen, to be disrespectful towards particular studies, or arts, or vocations, and those who are engaged in them. In saying that Law or Medicine is not the end of a University course, I do not mean to imply that the University does not teach Law or Medicine. What indeed can it teach at all, if it does not teach something particular? It teaches *all* knowledge by teaching all *branches* of knowledge, and in no other way. I do but say that there will be this distinction as regards a Professor of Law, or of Medicine, or of Geology, or of Political Economy, in a University and out of it, that out of a University he is in danger of being absorbed and narrowed by his pursuit, and of giving Lectures which are the Lectures of nothing more than a lawyer, physician, geologist, or political economist; whereas in a University he will just know where he and his science stand, he has come to it, as it were, from a height, he has taken a survey of all knowledge, he is kept from extravagance by the very rivalry of other studies, he has gained from them a special illumination and largeness of mind and freedom and self-possession, and he treats his own in consequence with a philosophy and a resource, which belongs not to the study itself, but to his liberal education.

This then is how I should solve the fallacy, for so I must call it, by which Locke and his disciples would frighten us from culti-

vating the intellect, under the notion that no education is useful which does not teach us some temporal calling, or some mechanical art, or some physical secret. I say that a cultivated intellect, because it is a good in itself, brings with it a power and a grace to every work and occupation which it undertakes, and enables us to be more useful, and to a greater number. There is a duty we owe to human society as such, to the state to which we belong, to the sphere in which we move, to the individuals towards whom we are variously related, and whom we successively encounter in life; and that philosophical or liberal education, as I have called it, which is the proper function of a University, if it refuses the foremost place to professional interests, does but postpone them to the formation of the citizen, and, while it subserves the larger interests of philanthropy, prepares also for the successful prosecution of those merely personal objects, which at first sight it seems to disparage.

7

And now, Gentlemen, I wish to be allowed to enforce in detail what I have been saying, by some extracts from the writings to which I have already alluded, and to which I am so greatly indebted.

"It is an undisputed maxim in Political Economy," says Dr. Copleston, "that the separation of professions and the division of labour tend to the perfection of every art, to the wealth of nations, to the general comfort and well-being of the community. This principle of division is in some instances pursued so far as to excite the wonder of people to whose notice it is for the first time pointed out. There is no saying to what extent it may not be carried; and the more the powers of each individual are concentrated in one employment, the greater skill and quickness will he naturally display in performing it. But, while he thus contributes more effectually to the accumulation of national wealth, he becomes himself more and more degraded as a rational being. In proportion as his sphere of action is narrowed his mental powers

and habits become contracted; and he resembles a subordinate part of some powerful machinery, useful in its place, but insignificant and worthless out of it. If it be necessary, as it is beyond all question necessary, that society should be split into divisions and subdivisions, in order that its several duties may be well performed, yet we must be careful not to yield up ourselves wholly and exclusively to the guidance of this system; we must observe what its evils are, and we should modify and restrain it, by bringing into action other principles, which may serve as a check and counterpoise to the main force.

"There can be no doubt that every art is improved by confining the professor of it to that single study. But, *although the art itself is advanced by this concentration of mind in its service, the individual who is confined to it goes back.* The advantage of the community is nearly in an inverse ratio with his own.

"Society itself requires some other contribution from each individual, besides the particular duties of his profession. And, if no such liberal intercourse be established, it is the common failing of human nature, to be engrossed with petty views and interests, to underrate the importance of all in which we are concerned, and to carry our partial notions into cases where they are inapplicable, to act, in short, as so many unconnected units, displacing and repelling one another.

"In the cultivation of literature is found that common link, which, among the higher and middling departments of life, unites the jarring sects and subdivisions into one interest, which supplies common topics, and kindles common feelings, unmixed with those narrow prejudices with which all professions are more or less infected. The knowledge, too, which is thus acquired, expands and enlarges the mind, excites its faculties, and calls those limbs and muscles into freer exercise which, by too constant use in one direction, not only acquire an illiberal air, but are apt to lose somewhat of their native play and energy. And thus, without directly qualifying a man for any of the employments of life,

it enriches and ennobles all. Without teaching him the peculiar business of any one office or calling, it enables him to act his part in each of them with better grace and more elevated carriage; and, if happily planned and conducted, is a main ingredient in that complete and generous education which fits a man 'to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.'"

8

The view of Liberal Education, advocated in these extracts, is expanded by Mr. Davison in the Essay to which I have already referred. He lays more stress on the "usefulness" of Liberal Education in the larger sense of the word than his predecessor in the controversy. Instead of arguing that the Utility of knowledge to the individual varies inversely with its Utility to the public, he chiefly employs himself on the suggestions contained in Dr. Copleston's last sentences. He shows, first, that a Liberal Education is something far higher, even in the scale of Utility, than what is commonly called a Useful Education, and next, that it is necessary or useful for the purposes even of that Professional Education which commonly engrosses the title of Useful. The former of these two theses he recommends to us in an argument from which the following passages are selected: —

"It is to take a very contracted view of life," he says, "to think with great anxiety how persons may be educated to superior skill in their department, comparatively neglecting or excluding the more liberal and enlarged cultivation. In his (Mr. Edgeworth's) system, the value of every attainment is to be measured by its subserviency to a calling. The specific duties of that calling are exalted at the cost of those free and independent tastes and virtues which come in to sustain the common relations of society, and raise the individual in them. In short, a man is to be usurped by his profession. He is to be clothed in its garb from head to foot. His virtues, his science, and his

ideas are all to be put into a gown or uniform, and the whole man to be shaped, pressed, and stiffened, in the exact mould of his technical character. Any interloping accomplishments, or a faculty which cannot be taken into public pay, if they are to be indulged in him at all, must creep along under the cloak of his more serviceable privileged merits. Such is the state of perfection to which the spirit and general tendency of this system would lead us.

"But the professional character is not the only one which a person engaged in a profession has to support. He is not always upon duty. There are services he owes, which are neither parochial, nor forensic, nor military, nor to be described by any such epithet of civil regulation, and yet are in no wise inferior to those that bear these authoritative titles; inferior neither in their intrinsic value, nor their moral import, nor their impression upon society. As a friend, as a companion, as a citizen at large; in the connections of domestic life; in the improvement and embellishment of his leisure, he has a sphere of action, revolving, if you please, within the sphere of his profession, but not clashing with it; in which if he can show none of the advantages of an improved understanding, whatever may be his skill or proficiency in the other, he is no more than an ill-educated man.

"There is a certain faculty in which all nations of any refinement are great practitioners. It is not taught at school or college as a distinct science; though it deserves that what is taught there should be made to have some reference to it; nor is it endowed at all by the public; everybody being obliged to exercise it for himself in person, which he does to the best of his skill. But in nothing is there a greater difference than in the manner of doing it. The advocates of professional learning will smile when we tell them that this same faculty which we would have encouraged, is simply that of speaking good sense in English, without fee or reward, in common conversation. They will smile when we lay some stress upon it; but in reality it is no

such trifle as they imagine. Look into the huts of savages, and see, for there is nothing to listen to, the dismal blank of their stupid hours of silence; their professional avocations of war and hunting are over; and, having nothing to do, they have nothing to say. Turn to improved life, and you find conversation in all its forms the medium of something more than an idle pleasure; indeed, a very active agent in circulating and forming the opinions, tastes, and feelings of a whole people. It makes of itself a considerable affair. Its topics are the most promiscuous — all those which do not belong to any particular province. As for its power and influence, we may fairly say that it is of just the same consequence to a man's immediate society, how he talks, as how he acts. Now of all those who furnish their share to rational conversation, a mere adept in his own art is universally admitted to be the worst. The sterility and uninstructiveness of such a person's social hours are quite proverbial. Or if he escape being dull, it is only by launching into ill-timed, learned loquacity. We do not desire of him lectures or speeches; and he has nothing else to give. Among benches he may be powerful; but seated on a chair he is quite another person. On the other hand, we may affirm, that one of the best companions is a man who, to the accuracy and research of a profession, has joined a free excursive acquaintance with various learning, and caught from it the spirit of general observation."

9

Having thus shown that a Liberal Education is a real benefit to the subjects of it, as members of society, in the various duties and circumstances and accidents of life, he goes on, in the next place, to show that, over and above those direct services which might fairly be expected of it, it actually subserves the discharge of those particular functions, and the pursuit of those particular advantages, which are connected with professional exertion, and to which Professional Education is directed.

"We admit," he observes, "that when a person makes a business of one pursuit, he is in the right way to eminence in it; and that divided attention will rarely give excellence in many. But our assent will go no further. For, to think that the way to prepare a person for excelling in any one pursuit (and that is the only point in hand), is to fetter his early studies, and cramp the first development of his mind, by a reference to the exigencies of that pursuit barely, is a very different notion, and one which, we apprehend, deserves to be exploded rather than received. Possibly a few of the abstract, insulated kinds of learning might be approached in that way. The exceptions to be made are very few, and need not be recited. But for the acquisition of professional and practical ability such maxims are death to it. The main ingredients of that ability are requisite knowledge and cultivated faculties; but, of the two, the latter is by far the chief. A man of well improved faculties has the command of another's knowledge. A man without them, has not the command of his own.

"Of the intellectual powers, the judgment is that which takes the foremost lead in life. How to form it to the two habits it ought to possess, of exactness and vigour, is the problem. It would be ignorant presumption so much as to hint at any routine of method by which these qualities may with certainty be imparted to every or any understanding. Still, however, we may safely lay it down that they are not to be got 'by a gatherer of simples,' but are the combined essence and extracts of many different things, drawn from much varied reading and discipline, first, and observation afterwards. For if there be a single intelligible point on this head, it is that a man who has been trained to think upon one subject or for one subject only, will never be a good judge even in that one: whereas the enlargement of his circle gives him increased knowledge and power in a rapidly increasing ratio. So much do ideas act, not as solitary units, but by grouping and combination; and so clearly do all the

things that fall within the proper province of the same faculty of the mind, intertwine with and support each other. Judgment lives as it were by comparison and discrimination. Can it be doubted, then, whether the range and extent of that assemblage of things upon which it is practised in its first essays are of use to its power?

"To open our way a little further on this matter, we will define what we mean by the power of judgment; and then try to ascertain among what kind of studies the improvement of it may be expected at all.

"Judgment does not stand here for a certain homely, useful quality of intellect, that guards a person from committing mistakes to the injury of his fortunes or common reputation; but for that master-principle of business, literature, and talent, which gives him strength in any subject he chooses to grapple with, and enables him to *seize the strong point* in it. Whether this definition be metaphysically correct or not, it comes home to the substance of our inquiry. It describes the power that every one desires to possess when he comes to act in a profession, or elsewhere; and corresponds with our best idea of a cultivated mind.

"Next, it will not be denied, that in order to do any good to the judgment, the mind must be employed upon such subjects as come within the cognizance of that faculty, and give some real exercise to its perceptions. Here we have a rule of selection by which the different parts of learning may be classed for our purpose. Those which belong to the province of the judgment are religion (in its evidences and interpretation), ethics, history, eloquence, poetry, theories of general speculation, the fine arts, and works of wit. Great as the variety of these large divisions of learning may appear, they are all held in union by two capital principles of connexion. First, they are all quarried out of one and the same great subject of man's moral, social, and feeling nature. And secondly, they are all under the control (more or less strict) of the same power of moral reason."

"If these studies," he continues, "be such as give a direct play and exercise to the faculty of the judgment, then they are the true basis of education for the active and inventive powers, whether destined for a profession or any other use. Miscellaneous as the assemblage may appear, of history, eloquence, poetry, ethics, etc., blended together, they will all conspire in an union of effect. They are necessary mutually to explain and interpret each other. The knowledge derived from them all will amalgamate, and the habits of a mind versed and practised in them by turns will join to produce a richer vein of thought and of more general and practical application than could be obtained of any single one, as the fusion of the metals into Corinthian brass gave the artist his most ductile and perfect material. Might we venture to imitate an author (whom indeed it is much safer to take as an authority than to attempt to copy), Lord Bacon, in some of his concise illustrations of the comparative utility of the different studies, we should say that history would give fulness, moral philosophy strength, and poetry elevation to the understanding. Such in reality is the natural force and tendency of the studies; but there are few minds susceptible enough to derive from them any sort of virtue adequate to those high expressions. We must be contented therefore to lower our panegyric to this, that a person cannot avoid receiving some infusion and tincture, at least, of those several qualities, from that course of diversified reading. One thing is unquestionable, that the elements of general reason are not to be found fully and truly expressed in any one kind of study; and that he who would wish to know her idiom, must read it in many books.

"If different studies are useful for aiding, they are still more useful for correcting each other; for as they have their particular merits severally, so they have their defects, and the most extensive acquaintance with one can produce only an intellect either too flashy or too jejune, or infected with some other fault of confined reading. History, for example, shows things as they are,

that is, the morals and interests of men disfigured and perverted by all their imperfections of passion, folly, and ambition; philosophy strips the picture too much; poetry adorns it too much; the concentrated lights of the three correct the false peculiar colouring of each, and show us the truth. The right mode of thinking upon it is to be had from them taken all together, as every one must know who has seen their united contributions of thought and feeling expressed in the masculine sentiment of our immortal statesman, Mr. Burke, whose eloquence is inferior only to his more admirable wisdom. If any mind improved like his, is to be our instructor, we must go to the fountain head of things as he did, and study not his works but his method, by the one we may become feeble imitators, by the other arrive at some ability of our own. But, as all biography assures us, he, and every other able thinker, has been formed, not by a parsimonious admeasurement of studies to some definite future object (which is Mr. Edgeworth's maxim), but by taking a wide and liberal compass, and thinking a great deal on many subjects with no better end in view than because the exercise was one which made them more rational and intelligent beings."

10

But I must bring these extracts to an end. To-day I have confined myself to saying that that training of the intellect, which is best for the individual himself, best enables him to discharge his duties to society. The Philosopher, indeed, and the man of the world differ in their very notion, but the methods, by which they are respectively formed, are pretty much the same. The Philosopher has the same command of matters of thought, which the true citizen and gentleman has of matters of business and conduct. If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world. It neither confines its views to particular professions on the one

hand, nor creates heroes or inspires genius on the other. Works indeed of genius fall under no art; heroic minds come under no rule; a University is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or the engineer, though such too it includes within its scope. But a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to be silent; he is able to converse, he is able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably, when he has nothing to impart himself; he is ever ready, yet never in the way; he is a pleasant companion, and a comrade you can depend upon; he knows when to be serious and when to trifle, and he has

a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has the repose of a mind which lives in itself, while it lives in the world, and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public, and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm. The art which tends to make a man all this, is in the object which it pursues as useful as the art of wealth or the art of health, though it is less susceptible of method, and less tangible, less certain, less complete in its result.

DEMOCRACY

Matthew Arnold

(1822–1888)

[Matthew Arnold, the son of the sturdy educator, Dr. Thomas Arnold, was born at Laleham in 1822. In 1841 he was matriculated at Balliol College, Oxford, and in 1843 he proved that he might possibly be a poet by winning with his *Alaric at Rome* the Newdigate prize for English verse, which has rewarded some geniuses and many forgotten mediocrities. Arnold did, indeed, rise steadily, in the next ten years, to a position in which he could fairly claim comradeship with the greatest Victorian poets. But his lofty stoicism as a singer is what impresses us most. This attitude towards poetry and also towards life has been best set forth by himself in his superb sonnet on the *Austerity of Poetry.*

"That son of Italy who tried to blow,
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred song,
In his light youth amid a festal throng
Sate with his bride to see a public show.
Fair was the bride, and on her front did glow
Youth like a star; and what to youth belong —
Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation strong.
A prop gave way! crash fell a platform! lo,
'Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death, she lay!
Shuddering, they drew her garments off — and found
A robe of sackcloth next the smooth, white skin.
Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse! young, gay,
Radiant, adorn'd, outside; a hidden ground
Of thought and of austerity within."

It will not be difficult to understand why a man of such mould should, after a few years of the more sequestered life of the conventional poet, accept (in 1851) the post of Lay Inspector of Schools. Arnold shared with men of supreme powers the faculty for pursuing at once the life of deeds and the life of dreams. It is only the second-rate personage who cannot be at once a visionary and an efficient man of the world. But it was Arnold's special nobility and his special defect that he should go about his life-work with his "robe of sackcloth" always beneath his magisterial mantle.

Because he fell, then, a little short of those poets, statesmen, teachers, soldiers who harmonize dreaming and doing in a music which is perfect,

Arnold turned to writing prose-tracts which, at their second best, are blighted with an excess of austerity, but which, at their best, are among the choicest English classics. He became above all things the apostle of culture, a culture so rich and noble and severe that he took rank with men as different as Carlyle and Ruskin among the great Victorian prophets, a culture so rich and noble and severe that to many of us to-day it seems more vital than ever, an unattainable ideal perhaps, but one which for the preservation and progress of the race we must forever pursue. All the essays which follow here, *Democracy*, *Hebraism and Hellenism*, and *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*, are thoroughly characteristic of Arnold's steadfast attitude. The first essay represents him in his most formal mood. Its caution and its catholicity of sympathy are representative of that *disinterested* point of view which he claimed as the fundamental necessity of all criticism. The reader will observe, however, that those sympathies, wide ranging and judicious as they are, seem, nevertheless, rather pale. This is the only considerable and, perhaps, inevitable defect that results from his doctrine of disinterestedness. The second and third essays are complete and perfect expressions of his gospel for our age. They are more informal in style than the essay on *Democracy*. In fact, their rather deliberate informality has annoyed some readers who are inclined to regard them as too patronizing or, as Professor Gates happily put it, "too consciously debonair." But, as Professor Gates sees, it is not difficult for one who really attempts it to overlook Arnold's "strut" in the search for his riches and to forgive a foible which was but the result of his earnest desire to address himself to everybody. And few will fail to enjoy his wonderful irony, which appears in *The Function of Criticism* at its best. He catches up smug and ugly phrases from his opponents and from the newspapers and uses them like a refrain in the midst of suave ridicule of his own that annihilates the Philistines. He seems to bow and smile and salute you with his rapier at the very moment he runs you through.

Arnold has angered equally the severe specialist and the crass utilitarian. Both frequently misunderstand him and accuse him of superficiality and aloofness from the grim business of life. Both these accusations are quite false. His biography and letters reveal the unflagging courage and zest with which he applied himself to the immediate duties of life. Indeed, his essays and poems reveal the same qualities with equal vividness to all but the purblind. Nor was he, in the slightest degree, a dilettante. He had rich equipment from books and experience. Culture to him was no dabbling, but a "study of perfection"; and this study of perfection was a constant stimulus to active living. Augustine Birrell has said the final word on Arnold:

"A severe critic of the world he indeed was, but finding himself in it and not precisely knowing what was beyond it, like a brave and true-hearted man he set himself to make the best of it. Its sights and sounds were dear to him."]

DEMOCRACY[1]

Matthew Arnold

In giving an account of education in certain countries of the Continent, I have often spoken of the State and its action in such a way as to offend, I fear, some of my readers, and to surprise others. With many Englishmen, perhaps with the majority, it is a maxim that the State, the executive power, ought to be entrusted with no more means of action than those which it is impossible to withhold from it; that the State neither would nor could make a safe use of any more extended liberty; would not, because it has in itself a natural instinct of despotism, which, if not jealously checked, would become outrageous; could not, because it is, in truth, not at all more enlightened, or fit to assume a lead, than the mass of this enlightened community.

No sensible man will lightly go counter to an opinion firmly held by a great body of his countrymen. He will take for granted, that for any opinion which has struck deep root among a people so powerful, so successful, and so well worthy of respect as the people of this country, there certainly either are, or have been, good and sound reasons. He will venture to impugn such an opinion with real hesitation, and only when he thinks he perceives that the reasons which once supported it exist no longer, or at any rate seem about to disappear very soon. For undoubtedly there arrive periods, when, the circumstances and conditions of government having changed, the guiding maxims of government ought to change also. *J'ai dit souvent*, says

[1] *Mixed Essays*, 1879.

Mirabeau,[1] admonishing the Court of France in 1790, *vu'on devait changer de manière de gouverner, lorsque le gouvernement n'est plus le même.* And these decisive changes in the political situation of a people happen gradually as well as violently. "In the silent lapse of events," says Burke,[2] writing in England twenty years before the French Revolution, "as material alterations have been insensibly brought about in the policy and character of governments and nations, as those which have been marked by the tumult of public revolutions."

I propose to submit to those who have been accustomed to regard all State-action with jealousy, some reasons for thinking that the circumstances which once made that jealousy prudent and natural have undergone an essential change. I desire to lead them to consider with me, whether, in the present altered conjuncture, that State-action, which was once dangerous, may not become, not only without danger in itself, but the means of helping us against dangers from another quarter. To combine and present the considerations upon which these two propositions are based, is a task of some difficulty and delicacy. My aim is to invite impartial reflection upon the subject, not to make a hostile attack against old opinions, still less to set on foot and fully equip a new theory. In offering, therefore, the thoughts which have suggested themselves to me, I shall studiously avoid all particular applications of them likely to give offence, and shall use no more illustration and development than may be indispensable to enable the reader to seize and appreciate them.

The dissolution of the old political parties which have governed this country since the Revolution of 1688 has long been remarked. It was repeatedly declared to be happening long before it actually took place, while the vital energy of these parties still subsisted in full vigour, and was threatened only by some temporary

[1] *Correspondence entre le Comte de Mirabeau et le Comte de la Marck*, publiée par M. de Bacourt, Paris, 1851, vol. ii. p. 143.

[2] Burke's *Works* (ed. 1852), vol. iii. p. 115.

obstruction. It has been eagerly deprecated long after it had actually begun to take place, when it was in full progress, and inevitable. These parties, differing in so much else, were yet alike in this, that they were both, in a certain broad sense, *aristocratical* parties. They were combinations of persons considerable, either by great family and estate, or by Court favour, or lastly, by eminent abilities and popularity; this last body, however, attaining participation in public affairs only through a conjunction with one or other of the former. These connections, though they contained men of very various degrees of birth and property, were still wholly leavened with the feelings and habits of the upper class of the nation. They had the bond of a common culture; and, however their political opinions and acts might differ, what they said and did had the stamp and style imparted by this culture, and by a common and elevated social condition.

Aristocratical bodies have no taste for a very imposing executive, or for a very active and penetrating domestic administration. They have a sense of equality among themselves, and of constituting in themselves what is greatest and most dignified in the realm, which makes their pride revolt against the overshadowing greatness and dignity of a commanding executive. They have a temper of independence, and a habit of uncontrolled action, which makes them impatient of encountering, in the management of the interior concerns of the country, the machinery and regulations of a superior and peremptory power. The different parties amongst them, as they successively get possession of the government, respect this jealous disposition in their opponents, because they share it themselves. It is a disposition proper to them as great personages, not as ministers; and as they are great personages for their whole life, while they may probably be ministers but for a very short time, the instinct of their social condition avails more with them than the instinct of their official function. To administer as little as possible, to make its weight felt in foreign affairs rather than in domestic,

to see in ministerial station rather the means of power and dignity than a means of searching and useful administrative activity, is the natural tendency of an aristocratic executive. It is a tendency which is creditable to the good sense of aristocracies, honourable to their moderation, and at the same time fortunate for their country, of whose internal development they are not fitted to have the full direction.

One strong and beneficial influence, however, the administration of a vigorous and high-minded aristocracy is calculated to exert upon a robust and sound people. I have had occasion, in speaking of Homer, to say very often, and with much emphasis, that he is *in the grand style*. It is the chief virtue of a healthy and uncorrupted aristocracy, that it is, in general, in this grand style. That elevation of character, that noble way of thinking and behaving, which is an eminent gift of nature to some individuals, is also often generated in whole classes of men (at least when these come of a strong and good race) by the possession of power, by the importance and responsibility of high station, by habitual dealing with great things, by being placed above the necessity of constantly struggling for little things. And it is the source of great virtues. It may go along with a not very quick or open intelligence; but it cannot well go along with a conduct vulgar and ignoble. A governing class imbued with it may not be capable of intelligently leading the masses of a people to the highest pitch of welfare for them; but it sets them an invaluable example of qualities without which no really high welfare can exist. This has been done for their nation by the best aristocracies. The Roman aristocracy did it; the English aristocracy has done it. They each fostered in the mass of the peoples they governed, — peoples of sturdy moral constitution and apt to learn such lessons, — a greatness of spirit, the natural growth of the condition of magnates and rulers, but not the natural growth of the condition of the common people. They made, the one of the Roman, the other of the English people, in spite

of all the shortcomings of each, great peoples, peoples *in the grand style*. And this they did, while wielding the people according to their own notions, and in the direction which seemed good to them; not as servants and instruments of the people, but as its commanders and heads; solicitous for the good of their country, indeed, but taking for granted that of that good they themselves were the supreme judges, and were to fix the conditions.

The time has arrived, however, when it is becoming impossible for the aristocracy of England to conduct and wield the English nation any longer. It still, indeed, administers public affairs; and it is a great error to suppose, as many persons in England suppose, that it administers but does not govern. He who administers, governs,[1] because he infixes his own mark and stamps his own character on all public affairs as they pass through his hands; and, therefore, so long as the English aristocracy administers the commonwealth, it still governs it. But signs not to be mistaken show that its headship and leadership of the nation, by virtue of the substantial acquiescence of the body of the nation in its predominance and right to lead, is nearly over. That acquiescence was the tenure by which it held its power; and it is fast giving way. The superiority of the upper class over all others is no longer so great; the willingness of the others to recognise that superiority is no longer so ready.

This change has been brought about by natural and inevitable causes, and neither the great not the multitude are to be blamed for it. The growing demands and audaciousness of the latter, the encroaching spirit of democracy, are, indeed, matters of loud complaint with some persons. But these persons are complaining of human nature itself, when they thus complain of a manifestation of its native and ineradicable impulse. Life itself consists, say the philosophers, in the effort *to affirm one's own*

[1] *Administrer, c'est gouverner,* says Mirabeau; *gouverner, c'est regner; tout se réduit là.*

essence; meaning by this to develop one's own existence fully and freely, to have ample light and air, to be neither cramped nor overshadowed. Democracy is trying *to affirm its own essence;* to live, to enjoy, to possess the world, as aristocracy has tried, and successfully tried, before it. Ever since Europe emerged from barbarism, ever since the condition of the common people began a little to improve, ever since their minds began to stir, this effort of democracy has been gaining strength; and the more their condition improves, the more strength this effort gains. So potent is the charm of life and expansion upon the living; the moment men are aware of them, they begin to desire them, and the more they have of them, the more they crave.

This movement of democracy, like other operations of nature, merits properly neither blame nor praise. Its partisans are apt to give it credit which it does not deserve, while its enemies are apt to upbraid it unjustly. Its friends celebrate it as the author of all freedom. But political freedom may very well be established by aristocratic founders; and, certainly, the political freedom of England owes more to the grasping English barons than to democracy. Social freedom, — equality, — that is rather the field of the conquests of democracy. And here what I must call the injustice of its enemies comes in. For its seeking after equality, democracy is often, in this country above all, vehemently and scornfully blamed; its temper contrasted with that worthier temper which can magnanimously endure social distinctions; its operations all referred, as of course, to the stirrings of a base and malignant envy. No doubt there is a gross and vulgar spirit of envy, prompting the hearts of many of those who cry for equality. No doubt there are ignoble natures which prefer equality to liberty. But what we have to ask is, when the life of democracy is admitted as something natural and inevitable, whether this or that product of democracy is a necessary growth from its parent stock, or merely an excrescence upon it. If it be the latter, certainly it may be due to the mean-

est and most culpable passions. But if it be the former, then this product, however base and blameworthy the passions which it may sometimes be made to serve, can in itself be no more reprehensible than the vital impulse of democracy is in itself reprehensible; and this impulse is, as has been shown, identical with the ceaseless vital effort of human nature itself.

Now, can it be denied, that a certain approach to equality, at any rate a certain reduction of signal inequalities, is a natural, instinctive demand of that impulse which drives society as a whole, — no longer individuals and limited classes only, but the mass of a community, — to develop itself with the utmost possible fulness and freedom? Can it be denied, that to live in a society of equals tends in general to make a man's spirits expand, and his faculties work easily and actively; while, to live in a society of superiors, although it may occasionally be a very good discipline, yet in general tends to tame the spirits and to make the play of the faculties less secure and active? Can it be denied, that to be heavily overshadowed, to be profoundly insignificant, has, on the whole, a depressing and benumbing effect on the character? I know that some individuals react against the strongest impediments, and owe success and greatness to the efforts which they are thus forced to make. But the question is not about individuals. The question is about the common bulk of mankind, persons without extraordinary gifts or exceptional energy, and who will ever require, in order to make the best of themselves, encouragement and directly favouring circumstances. Can any one deny, that for these the spectacle, when they would rise, of a condition of splendour, grandeur, and culture, which they cannot possibly reach, has the effect of making them flag in spirit, and of disposing them to sink despondingly back into their own condition? Can any one deny, that the knowledge how poor and insignificant the best condition of improvement and culture attainable by them must be esteemed by a class incomparably richer-endowed, tends to cheapen this

modest possible amelioration in the account of those classes also for whom it would be relatively a real progress, and to disenchant their imaginations with it? It seems to me impossible to deny this. And therefore a philosophic observer,[1] with no love for democracy, but rather with a terror of it, has been constrained to remark, that "the common people is more uncivilized in aristocratic countries than in any others;" because there "the lowly and the poor feel themselves, as it were, overwhelmed with the weight of their own inferiority." He has been constrained to remark,[2] that "there is such a thing as a manly and legitimate passion for equality, prompting men to desire to be, *all* of them, in the enjoyment of power and consideration." And, in France, that very equality which is by us so impetuously decried, while it has by no means improved (it is said) the upper classes of French society, has undoubtedly given to the lower classes, to the body of the common people, a self-respect, an enlargement of spirit, a consciousness of counting for something in their country's action, which has raised them in the scale of humanity. The common people, in France, seems to me the soundest part of the French nation. They seem to me more free from the two opposite degradations of multitudes, brutality and servility, to have a more developed human life, more of what distinguishes elsewhere the cultured classes from the vulgar, than the common people in any other country with which I am acquainted.

I do not say that grandeur and prosperity may not be attained by a nation divided into the most widely distinct classes, and presenting the most signal inequalities of rank and fortune.

[1] M. de Tocqueville. See his *Démocratie en Amérique* (edit. of 1835), vol. i. p. 11. "Le peuple est plus grossier dans les pays aristocratiques que partout ailleurs. Dans ces lieux, où se rencontrent des hommes si forts et si riches, les faibles et les pauvres se sentent comme accablés de leur bassesse; ne découvrant aucun point par lequel ils puissent regagner l'égalité, ils désespèrent entièrement d'eux-mêmes, et se laissent tomber au dessous de la dignité humaine."

[2] *Démocratie en Amérique*, vol. i. p. 60.

I do not say that great national virtues may not be developed in it. I do not even say that a popular order, accepting this demarcation of classes as an eternal providential arrangement, not questioning the natural right of a superior order to lead it, content within its own sphere, admiring the grandeur and high-mindedness of its ruling class, and catching on its own spirit some reflex of what it thus admires, may not be a happier body, as to the eye of the imagination it is certainly a more beautiful body, than a popular order, pushing, excited, and presumptuous; a popular order, jealous of recognising fixed superiorities, petulantly claiming to be as good as its betters, and tastelessly attiring itself with the fashions and designations which have become unalterably associated with a wealthy and refined class, and which, tricking out those who have neither wealth nor refinement, are ridiculous. But a popular order of that old-fashioned stamp exists now only for the imagination. It is not the force with which modern society has to reckon. Such a body may be a sturdy, honest, and sound-hearted lower class; but it is not a democratic people. It is not that power which at the present day in all nations is to be found existing; in some, has obtained the mastery; in others, is yet in a state of expectation and preparation.

The power of France in Europe is at this day mainly owing to the completeness with which she has organised democratic institutions. The action of the French State is excessive; but it is too little understood in England that the French people has adopted this action for its own purposes, has in great measure attained those purposes by it, and owes to its having done so the chief part of its influence in Europe. The growing power in Europe is democracy; and France has organised democracy with a certain indisputable grandeur and success. The ideas of 1789 were working everywhere in the eighteenth century; but it was because in France the State adopted them that the French Revolution became an historic epoch for the world, and France the

lode-star of Continental democracy. Her airs of superiority and her overweening pretensions come from her sense of the power which she derives from this cause. Every one knows how Frenchmen proclaim France to be at the head of civilisation, the French army to be the soldier of God, Paris to be the brain of Europe, and so on. All this is, no doubt, in a vein of sufficient fatuity and bad taste; but it means, at bottom, that France believes she has so organised herself as to facilitate for all members of her society full and free expansion; that she believes herself to have remodelled her institutions with an eye to reason rather than custom, and to right rather than fact; it means, that she believes the other peoples of Europe to be preparing themselves, more or less rapidly, for a like achievement, and that she is conscious of her power and influence upon them as an initiatress and example. In this belief there is a part of truth and a part of delusion. I think it is more profitable for a Frenchman to consider the part of delusion contained in it; for an Englishman, the part of truth.

It is because aristocracies almost inevitably fail to appreciate justly, or even to take into their mind, the instinct pushing the masses towards expansion and fuller life, that they lose their hold over them. It is the old story of the incapacity of aristocracies for ideas; the secret of their want of success in modern epochs. The people treats them with flagrant injustice, when it denies all obligation to them. They can, and often do, impart a high spirit, a fine ideal of grandeur, to the people; thus they lay the foundations of a great nation. But they leave the people still the multitude, the crowd; they have small belief in the power of the ideas which are its life. Themselves a power reposing on all which is most solid, material, and visible, they are slow to attach any great importance to influences impalpable, spiritual, and viewless. Although, therefore, a disinterested looker-on might often be disposed, seeing what has actually been achieved by aristocracies, to wish to retain or replace them in

their preponderance, rather than commit a nation to the hazards of a new and untried future; yet the masses instinctively feel that they can never consent to this without renouncing the inmost impulse of their being; and that they should make such a renunciation cannot seriously be expected of them. Except on conditions which make its expansion, in the sense understood by itself, fully possible, democracy will never frankly ally itself with aristocracy; and on these conditions perhaps no aristocracy will ever frankly ally itself with it. Even the English aristocracy, so politic, so capable of compromises, has shown no signs of being able so to transform itself as to render such an alliance possible. The reception given by the Peers to the bill for establishing life-peerages was, in this respect, of ill omen. The separation between aristocracy and democracy will probably, therefore, go on still widening.

And it must in fairness be added, that as in one most important part of general human culture, — openness to ideas and ardour for them, — aristocracy is less advanced than democracy, to replace or keep the latter under the tutelage of the former would in some respects be actually unfavourable to the progress of the world. At epochs when new ideas are powerfully fermenting in a society, and profoundly changing its spirit, aristocracies, as they are in general not long suffered to guide it without question, so are they by nature not well fitted to guide it intelligently.

In England, democracy has been slow in developing itself, having met with much to withstand it, not only in the worth of the aristocracy, but also in the fine qualities of the common people. The aristocracy has been more in sympathy with the common people than perhaps any other aristocracy. It has rarely given them great umbrage; it has neither been frivolous, so as to provoke their contempt, nor impertinent, so as to provoke their irritation. Above all, it has in general meant to act with justice, according to its own notions of justice. Therefore

the feeling of admiring deference to such a class was more deep-rooted in the people of this country, more cordial, and more persistent, than in any people of the Continent. But, besides this, the vigour and high spirit of the English common people bred in them a self-reliance which disposed each man to act individually and independently; and so long as this disposition prevails through a nation divided into classes, the predominance of an aristocracy, of the class containing the greatest and strongest individuals of the nation, is secure. Democracy is a force in which the concert of a great number of men makes up for the weakness of each man taken by himself; democracy accepts a certain relative rise in their condition, obtainable by this concert for a great number, as something desirable in itself, because though this is undoubtedly far below grandeur, it is yet a good deal above insignificance. A very strong, self-reliant people neither easily learns to act in concert, nor easily brings itself to regard any middling good, any good short of the best, as an object ardently to be coveted and striven for. It keeps its eye on the grand prizes, and these are to be won only by distancing competitors, by getting before one's comrades, by succeeding all by one's self; and so long as a people works thus individually, it does not work democratically. The English people has all the qualities which dispose a people to work individually; may it never lose them! A people without the salt of these qualities, relying wholly on mutual co-operation, and proposing to itself second-rate ideals, would arrive at the pettiness and stationariness of China. But the English people is no longer so entirely ruled by them as not to show visible beginnings of democratic action; it becomes more and more sensible to the irresistible seduction of democratic ideas, promising to each individual of the multitude increased self-respect, and expansion with the increased importance and authority of the multitude to which he belongs, with the diminished preponderance of the aristocratic class above him.

While the habit and disposition of deference are thus dying out among the lower classes of the English nation, it seems to me indisputable that the advantages which command deference, that eminent superiority in high feeling, dignity, and culture, tend to diminish among the highest class. I shall not be suspected of any inclination to underrate the aristocracy of this country. I regard it as the worthiest, as it certainly has been the most successful aristocracy, of which history makes record. If it has not been able to develop excellences which do not belong to the nature of an aristocracy, yet it has been able to avoid defects to which the nature of an aristocracy is peculiarly prone. But I cannot read the history of the flowering time of the English aristocracy, the eighteenth century, and then look at this aristocracy in our own century, without feeling that there has been a change. I am not now thinking of private and domestic virtues, of morality, of decorum. Perhaps with respect to these there has in this class, as in society at large, been a change for the better. I am thinking of those public and conspicuous virtues by which the multitude is captivated and led, — lofty spirit, commanding character, exquisite culture. It is true that the advance of all classes in culture and refinement may make the culture of one class, which, isolated, appeared remarkable, appear so no longer; but exquisite culture and great dignity are always something rare and striking, and it is the distinction of the English aristocracy, in the eighteenth century, that not only was their culture something rare by comparison with the rawness of the masses, it was something rare and admirable in itself. It is rather that this rare culture of the highest class has actually somewhat declined,[1] than that it has come to look less by juxtaposition with the augmented culture of other classes.

[1] This will appear doubtful to no one well acquainted with the literature and memoirs of the last century. To give but two illustrations out of a thousand. Let the reader refer to the anecdote told by Robert Wood in his *Essay on the Genius of Homer* (London, 1775), p. vii. and to Lord Chesterfield's *Letters* (edit. of 1845),

Probably democracy has something to answer for in this falling off of her rival. To feel itself raised on high, venerated, followed, no doubt stimulates a fine nature to keep itself worthy to be followed, venerated, raised on high; hence that lofty maxim, *noblesse oblige*. To feel its culture something precious and singular, makes such a nature zealous to retain and extend it. The elation and energy thus fostered by the sense of its advantages, certainly enhances the worth, strengthens the behaviour, and quickens all the active powers of the class enjoying it. *Possunt quia posse videntur*. The removal of the stimulus a little relaxes their energy. It is not so much that they sink to be somewhat less than themselves, as that they cease to be somewhat more than themselves. But, however this may be, whencesoever the change may proceed, I cannot doubt that in the aristocratic virtue, in the intrinsic commanding force of the English upper class, there is a diminution. Relics of a great generation are still, perhaps, to be seen amongst them, surviving exemplars of noble manners and consummate culture; but they disappear one after the other, and no one of their kind takes their place. At the very moment when democracy becomes less and less disposed to follow and to admire, aristocracy becomes less and less qualified to command and to captivate.

On the one hand, then, the masses of the people in this country are preparing to take a much more active part than formerly in controlling its destinies; on the other hand, the aristocracy (using this word in the widest sense, to include not only the nobility and landed gentry, but also those reinforcements from the classes bordering upon itself, which this class constantly attracts and assimilates), while it is threatened with losing its hold on the rudder of government, its power to give to public affairs its own bias and direction, is losing also that influence on the spirit and character of the people which it long exercised.

vol. i. pp. 115, 143; vol. ii. p. 54; and then say, whether the culture there indicated as the culture of a *class* has maintained itself at that level.

I know that this will be warmly denied by some persons. Those who have grown up amidst a certain state of things, those whose habits, and interests, and affections are closely concerned with its continuance, are slow to believe that it is not a part of the order of nature, or that it can ever come to an end. But I think that what I have here laid down will not appear doubtful either to the most competent and friendly foreign observers of this country, or to those Englishmen who, clear of all influences of class or party, have applied themselves steadily to see the tendencies of their nation as they really are. Assuming it be true, a great number of considerations are suggested by it; but it is my purpose here to insist upon one only.

That one consideration is: On what action may we rely to replace, for some time at any rate, that action of the aristocracy upon the people of this country, which we have seen exercise an influence in many respects elevating and beneficial, but which is rapidly, and from inevitable causes, ceasing? In other words, and to use a short and significant modern expression which every one understands, what influence may help us to prevent the English people from becoming, with the growth of democracy, *Americanised?* I confess I am disposed to answer: On the action of the State.

I know what a chorus of objectors will be ready. One will say: Rather repair and restore the influence of aristocracy. Another will say: It is not a bad thing, but a good thing, that the English people should be Americanised. But the most formidable and the most widely entertained objection, by far, will be that which founds itself upon the present actual state of things in another country; which says: Look at France! there you have a signal example of the alliance of democracy with a powerful State-action, and see how it works.

This last and principal objection I will notice at once. I have had occasion to touch upon the first already, and upon the second I shall touch presently. It seems to me, then, that one

may save one's self from much idle terror at names and shadows if one will be at the pains to remember what different conditions the different character of two nations must necessarily impose on the operation of any principle. That which operates noxiously in one, may operate wholesomely in the other; because the unsound part of the one's character may be yet further inflamed and enlarged by it, the unsound part of the other's may find in it a corrective and an abatement. This is the great use which two unlike characters may find in observing each other. Neither is likely to have the other's faults, so each may safely adopt as much as suits him of the other's qualities. If I were a Frenchman I should never be weary of admiring the independent, individual, local habits of action in England, of directing attention to the evils occasioned in France by the excessive action of the State; for I should be very sure that, say what I might, the part of the State would never be too small in France, nor that of the individual too large. Being an Englishman, I see nothing but good in freely recognising the coherence, rationality, and efficaciousness which characterise the strong State-action of France, of acknowledging the want of method, reason, and result which attend the feeble State-action of England; because I am very sure that, strengthen in England the action of the State as one may, it will always find itself sufficiently controlled. But when either the *Constitutionnel* sneers at the do-little talkativeness of parliamentary government, or when the *Morning Star* inveighs against the despotism of a centralised administration, it seems to me that they lose their labour, because they are hardening themselves against dangers to which they are neither of them liable. Both the one and the other, in plain truth,

> "Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to."

They should rather exchange doctrines one with the other, and each might thus, perhaps, be profited.

So that the exaggeration of the action of the State, in France, furnishes no reason for absolutely refusing to enlarge the action of the State in England; because the genius and temper of the people of this country are such as to render impossible that exaggeration which the genius and temper of the French rendered easy. There is no danger at all that the native independence and individualism of the English character will ever belie itself, and become either weakly prone to lean on others, or blindly confiding in them.

English democracy runs no risk of being overmastered by the State; it is almost certain that it will throw off the tutelage of aristocracy. Its real danger is, that it will have far too much its own way, and be left far too much to itself. "What harm will there be in that?" say some; "are we not a self-governing people?" I answer: "We have never yet been a *self-governing democracy*, or anything like it." The difficulty for democracy is, how to find and keep high ideals. The individuals who compose it are, the bulk of them, persons who need to follow an ideal not to set one; and one ideal of greatness, high feeling, and fine culture, which an aristocracy once supplied to them, they lose by the very fact of ceasing to be a lower order and becoming a democracy. Nations are not truly great solely because the individuals composing them are numerous, free, and active; but they are great when these numbers, this freedom, and this activity are employed in the service of an ideal higher than that of an ordinary man, taken by himself. Our society is probably destined to become much more democratic; who or what will give a high tone to the nation then? That is the grave question.

The greatest men of America, her Washingtons, Hamiltons, Madisons, well understanding that aristocratical institutions are not in all times and places possible; well perceiving that in their Republic there was no place for these; comprehending, therefore, that from these that security for national dignity and greatness, an ideal commanding popular reverence, was not to

be obtained, but knowing that this ideal was indispensable, would have been rejoiced to found a substitute for it in the dignity and authority of the State. They deplored the weakness and insignificance of the executive power as a calamity. When the inevitable course of events has made our self-government something really like that of America, when it has removed or weakened that security for national dignity, which we possessed in *aristocracy*, will the substitute of the *State* be equally wanting to us? If it is, then the dangers of America will really be ours; the dangers which come from the multitude being in power, with no adequate ideal to elevate or guide the multitude.

It would really be wasting time to contend at length, that to give more prominence to the idea of the State is now possible in this country, without endangering liberty. In other countries the habits and dispositions of the people may be such that the State, if once it acts, may be easily suffered to usurp exorbitantly; here they certainly are not. Here the people will always sufficiently keep in mind that any public authority is a trust delegated by themselves, for certain purposes, and with certain limits; and if that authority pretends to an absolute, independent character, they will soon enough (and very rightly) remind it of its error. Here there can be no question of a paternal government, of an irresponsible executive power, professing to act for the people's good, but without the people's consent, and, if necessary, against the people's wishes; here no one dreams of removing a single constitutional control, of abolishing a single safeguard for securing a correspondence between the acts of government and the will of the nation. The question is, whether, retaining all its power of control over a government which should abuse its trust, the nation may not now find advantage in voluntarily allowing to it purposes somewhat ampler, and limits somewhat wider within which to execute them, than formerly; whether the nation may not thus acquire in the State an ideal of high reason and right feeling, representing its best self, com-

manding general respect, and forming a rallying-point for the intelligence and for the worthiest instincts of the community, which will herein find a true bond of union.

I am convinced that if the worst mischiefs of democracy ever happen in England, it will be, not because a new condition of things has come upon us unforeseen, but because, though we all foresaw it, our efforts to deal with it were in the wrong direction. At the present time, almost every one believes in the growth of democracy, almost every one talks of it, almost every one laments it; but the last thing people can be brought to do is to make timely preparation for it. Many of those who, if they would, could do most to forward this work of preparation, are made slack and hesitating by the belief that, after all, in England, things may probably never go very far; that it will be possible to keep much more of the past than speculators say. Others, with a more robust faith, think that all democracy wants is vigorous putting-down; and that, with a good will and strong hand, it is perfectly possible to retain or restore the whole system of the Middle Ages. Others, free from the prejudices of class and position which warp the judgment of these, and who would, I believe, be the first and greatest gainers by strengthening the hands of the State, are averse from doing so by reason of suspicions and fears, once perfectly well-grounded, but, in this age and in the present circumstances, well-grounded no longer.

I speak of the middle classes. I have already shown how it is the natural disposition of an aristocratical class to view with jealousy the development of a considerable State-power. But this disposition has in England found extraordinary favour and support in regions not aristocratical, — from the middle classes; and, above all, from the kernel of these classes, the Protestant Dissenters. And for a very good reason. In times when passions ran high, even an aristocratical executive was easily stimulated into using, for the gratification of its friends and the

abasement of its enemies, those administrative engines which, the moment it chose to stretch its hand forth, stood ready for its grasp. Matters of domestic concern, matters of religious profession and religious exercise, offered a peculiar field for an intervention gainful and agreeable to friends, injurious and irritating to enemies. Such an intervention was attempted and practised. Government lent its machinery and authority to the aristocratical and ecclesiastical party, which it regarded as its best support. The party which suffered comprised the flower and strength of that middle class of society, always very flourishing and robust in this country. That powerful class, from this specimen of the administrative activity of government, conceived a strong antipathy against all intervention of the State in certain spheres. An active, stringent administration in those spheres meant at that time a High Church and Prelatic administration in them, an administration galling to the Puritan party and to the middle class; and this aggrieved class had naturally no proneness to draw nice philosophical distinctions between State-action in these spheres, as a thing for abstract consideration, and State-action in them as they practically felt it and supposed themselves likely long to feel it, guided by their adversaries. In the minds of the English middle class, therefore, State-action in social and domestic concerns became inextricably associated with the idea of a Conventicle Act, a Five-Mile Act, an Act of Uniformity. Their abhorrence of such a State-action as this they extended to State-action in general; and, having never known a beneficent and just State-power, they enlarged their hatred of a cruel and partial State-power, the only one they had ever known, into a maxim that no State-power was to be trusted, that the least action, in certain provinces, was rigorously to be denied to the State, whenever this denial was possible.

Thus that jealousy of an important, sedulous, energetic executive, natural to grandees unwilling to suffer their personal authority to be circumscribed, their individual grandeur to be

eclipsed, by the authority and grandeur of the State, became reinforced in this country by a like sentiment among the middle classes, who had no such authority or grandeur to lose, but who, by a hasty reasoning, had theoretically condemned for ever an agency which they had practically found at times oppressive. *Leave us to ourselves!* magnates and middle classes alike cried to the State. Not only from those who were full and abounded went up this prayer, but also from those whose condition admitted of great amelioration. Not only did the whole repudiate the physician, but also those who were sick.

For it is evident, that the action of a diligent, an impartial, and a national government, while it can do little to better the condition, already fortunate enough, of the highest and richest class of its people, can really do much, by institution and regulation, to better that of the middle and lower classes. The State can bestow certain broad collective benefits, which are indeed not much if compared with the advantages already possessed by individual grandeur, but which are rich and valuable if compared with the make-shifts of mediocrity and poverty. A good thing meant for the many cannot well be so exquisite as the good things of the few; but it can easily, if it comes from a donor of great resources and wide power, be incomparably better than what the many could, unaided, provide for themselves.

In all the remarks which I have been making, I have hitherto abstained from any attempt to suggest a positive application of them. I have limited myself to simply pointing out in how changed a world of ideas we are living; I have not sought to go further, and to discuss in what particular manner the world of facts is to adapt itself to this changed world of ideas. This has been my rule so far; but from this rule I shall here venture to depart, in order to dwell for a moment on a matter of practical institution, designed to meet new social exigencies: on the intervention of the State in public education.

The public secondary schools of France, decreed by the Rev-

olution and established under the Consulate, are said by many good judges to be inferior to the old colleges. By means of the old colleges and of private tutors, the French aristocracy could procure for its children (so it is said, and very likely with truth) a better training than that which is now given in the lyceums. Yes; but the boon conferred by the State, when it founded the lyceums, was not for the aristocracy; it was for the vast middle class of Frenchmen. This class, certainly, had not already the means of a better training for its children, before the State interfered. This class, certainly, would not have succeeded in procuring by its own efforts a better training for its children, if the State had not interfered. Through the intervention of the State this class enjoys better schools for its children, not than the great and rich enjoy (that is not the question), but than the same class enjoys in any country where the State has not interfered to found them. The lyceums may not be so good as Eton or Harrow; but they are a great deal better than a *Classical and Commercial Academy*.

The aristocratic classes in England may, perhaps, be well content to rest satisfied with their Eton and Harrow. The State is not likely to do better for them. Nay, the superior confidence, spirit, and style, engendered by a training in the great public schools, constitute for these classes a real privilege, a real engine of command, which they might, if they were selfish, be sorry to lose by the establishment of schools great enough to beget a like spirit in the classes below them. But the middle classes in England have every reason not to rest content with their private schools; the State can do a great deal better for them. By giving to schools for these classes a public character, it can bring the instruction in them under a criticism which the stock of knowledge and judgment in our middle classes is not of itself at present able to supply. By giving to them a national character, it can confer on them a greatness and a noble spirit, which the tone of these classes is not of itself at present adequate

to impart. Such schools would soon prove notable competitors with the existing public schools; they would do these a great service by stimulating them, and making them look into their own weak points more closely. Economical, because with charges uniform and under severe revision, they would do a great service to that large body of persons who, at present, seeing that on the whole the best secondary instruction to be found is that of the existing public schools, obtain it for their children from a sense of duty, although they can ill afford it, and although its cost is certainly exorbitant. Thus the middle classes might, by the aid of the State, better their instruction, while still keeping its cost moderate. This in itself would be a gain; but this gain would be slight in comparison with that of acquiring the sense of belonging to great and honourable seats of learning, and of breathing in their youth the air of the best culture of their nation. This sense would be an educational influence for them of the highest value. It would really augment their self-respect and moral force; it would truly fuse them with the class above, and tend to bring about for them the equality which they are entitled to desire.

So it is not State-action in itself which the middle and lower classes of a nation ought to deprecate; it is State-action exercised by a hostile class, and for their oppression. From a State-action reasonably, equitably, and nationally exercised, they may derive great benefit; greater, by the very nature and necessity of things, than can be derived from this source by the class above them. For the middle or lower classes to obstruct such a State-action, to repel its benefits, is to play the game of their enemies, and to prolong for themselves a condition of real inferiority.

This, I know, is rather dangerous ground to tread upon. The great middle classes of this country are conscious of no weakness, no inferiority; they do not want any one to provide anything for them. Such as they are, they believe that the freedom and prosperity of England are their work, and that the future

belongs to them. No one esteems them more than I do; but those who esteem them most, and who most believe in their capabilities, can render them no better service than by pointing out in what they underrate their deficiencies, and how their deficiencies, if unremedied, may impair their future. They want culture and dignity; they want ideas. Aristocracy has culture and dignity; democracy has readiness for new ideas, and ardour for what ideas it possesses. Of these, our middle class has the last only: ardour for the ideas it already possesses. It believes ardently in liberty, it believes ardently in industry; and, by its zealous belief in these two ideas, it has accomplished great things. What it has accomplished by its belief in industry is patent to all the world. The liberties of England are less its exclusive work than it supposes; for these, aristocracy has achieved nearly as much. Still, of one inestimable part of liberty, liberty of thought, the middle class has been (without precisely intending it) the principal champion. The intellectual action of the Church of England upon the nation has been insignificant; its social action has been great. The social action of Protestant Dissent, that genuine product of the English middle class, has not been civilising; its positive intellectual action has been insignificant; its negative intellectual action, — in so far as by strenuously maintaining for itself, against persecution, liberty of conscience and the right of free opinion, it at the same time maintained and established this right as a universal principle, — has been invaluable. But the actual results of this negative intellectual service rendered by Protestant Dissent, — by the middle class, — to the whole community, great as they undoubtedly are, must not be taken for something which they are not. It is a very great thing to be able to think as you like; but, after all, an important question remains: *what* you think. It is a fine thing to secure a free stage and no favour; but, after all, the part which you play on that stage will have to be criticised. Now, all the liberty and industry in the world

will not ensure these two things: a high reason and a fine culture. They may favour them, but they will not of themselves produce them; they may exist without them. But it is by the appearance of these two things, in some shape or other, in the life of a nation, that it becomes something more than an independent, an energetic, a successful nation, — that it becomes a *great* nation.

In modern epochs the part of a high reason, of ideas, acquires constantly increasing importance in the conduct of the world's affairs. A fine culture is the complement of a high reason, and it is in the conjunction of both with character, with energy, that the ideal for men and nations is to be placed. It is common to hear remarks on the frequent divorce between culture and character, and to infer from this that culture is a mere varnish, and that character only deserves any serious attention. No error can be more fatal. Culture without character is, no doubt, something frivolous, vain, and weak; but character without culture is, on the other hand, something raw, blind, and dangerous. The most interesting, the most truly glorious peoples, are those in which the alliance of the two has been effected most successfully, and its result spread most widely. This is why the spectacle of ancient Athens has such profound interest for a rational man; that it is the spectacle of the culture of a *people*. It is not an aristocracy, leavening with its own high spirit the multitude which it wields, but leaving it the unformed multitude still; it is not a democracy, acute and energetic, but tasteless, narrow-minded, and ignoble; it is the middle and lower classes in the highest development of their humanity that these classes have yet reached. It was the *many* who relished those arts who were not satisfied with less than those monuments. In the conversations recorded by Plato, or even by the matter-of-fact Xenophon, which for the free yet refined discussion of ideas have set the tone for the whole cultivated world, shopkeepers and tradesmen of Athens mingle as speakers. For any one but

a pedant, this is why a handful of Athenians of two thousand years ago are more interesting than the millions of most nations our contemporaries. Surely, if they knew this, those friends of progress, who have confidently pronounced the remains of the ancient world to be so much lumber, and a classical education an aristocratic impertinence, might be inclined to reconsider their sentence.

The course taken in the next fifty years by the middle classes of this nation will probably give a decisive turn to its history. If they will not seek the alliance of the State for their own elevation, if they go on exaggerating their spirit of individualism, if they persist in their jealousy of all governmental action, if they cannot learn that the antipathies and the shibboleths of a past age are now an anachronism for them — that will not prevent them, probably, from getting the rule of their country for a season, but they will certainly *Americanise* it. They will rule it by their energy, but they will deteriorate it by their low ideals and want of culture. In the decline of the aristocratical element, which in some sort supplied an ideal to ennoble the spirit of the nation and to keep it together, there will be no other element present to perform this service. It is of itself a serious calamity for a nation that its tone of feeling and grandeur of spirit should be lowered or dulled. But the calamity appears far more serious still when we consider that the middle classes, remaining as they are now, with their narrow, harsh, unintelligent, and unattractive spirit and culture, will almost certainly fail to mould or assimilate the masses below them, whose sympathies are at the present moment actually wider and more liberal than theirs. They arrive, these masses, eager to enter into possession of the world, to gain a more vivid sense of their own life and activity. In this their irrepressible development, their natural educators and initiators are those immediately above them, the middle classes. If these classes cannot win their sympathy or give them their direction, society is in danger of falling into anarchy.

Therefore, with all the force I can, I wish to urge upon the middle classes of this country, both that they might be very greatly profited by the action of the State, and also that they are continuing their opposition to such action out of an unfounded fear. But at the same time I say that the middle classes have the right, in admitting the action of government, to make the condition that this government shall be one of their own adoption, one that they can trust. To ensure this is now in their own power. If they do not as yet ensure this, they ought to do so, they have the means of doing so. Two centuries ago they had not; now they have. Having this security, let them now show themselves jealous to keep the action of the State equitable and rational, rather than to exclude the action of the State altogether. If the State acts amiss, let them check it, but let them no longer take it for granted that the State cannot possibly act usefully.

The State — but what is *the State?* cry many. Speculations on the idea of a State abound, but these do not satisfy them; of that which is to have practical effect and power they require a plain account. The full force of the term, *the State*, as the full force of any other important term, no one will master without going a little deeply, without resolutely entering the world of ideas; but it is possible to give in very plain language an account of it sufficient for all practical purposes. The State is properly just what Burke called it — *the nation in its collective and corporate character.* The State is the representative acting-power of the nation; the action of the State is the representative action of the nation. Nominally emanating from the Crown, as the ideal unity in which the nation concentrates itself, this action, by the constitution of our country, really emanates from the ministers of the Crown. It is common to hear the depreciators of State-action run through a string of ministers' names, and then say: "Here is really your *State;* would you accept the action of these men as your own representative action? In what respect is their judgment on national affairs likely to be

any better than that of the rest of the world?" In the first place I answer: Even supposing them to be originally no better or wiser than the rest of the world, they have two great advantages from their position: access to almost boundless means of information, and the enlargement of mind which the habit of dealing with great affairs tends to produce. Their position itself, therefore, if they are men of only average honesty and capacity, tends to give them a fitness for acting on behalf of the nation superior to that of other men of equal honesty and capacity who are not in the same position. This fitness may be yet further increased by treating them as persons on whom, indeed, a very grave responsibility has fallen, and from whom very much will be expected; — nothing less than the representing, each of them in his own department, under the control of Parliament, and aided by the suggestions of public opinion, the collective energy and intelligence of his nation. By treating them as men on whom all this devolves to do, to their honour if they do it well, to their shame if they do it ill, one probably augments their faculty of well-doing; as it is excellently said: "To treat men as if they were better than they are, is the surest way to *make* them better than they are." But to treat them as if they had been shuffled into their places by a lucky accident, were most likely soon to be shuffled out of them again, and meanwhile ought to magnify themselves and their office as little as possible; to treat them as if they and their functions could without much inconvenience be quite dispensed with, and they ought perpetually to be admiring their own inconceivable good fortune in being permitted to discharge them; — this is the way to paralyse all high effort in the executive government, to extinguish all lofty sense of responsibility; to make its members either merely solicitous for the gross advantages, the emolument, and self-importance, which they derive from their offices, or else timid, apologetic, and self-mistrustful in filling them; in either case, formal and inefficient.

But in the second place I answer: If the executive government is really in the hands of men no wiser than the bulk of mankind, of men whose action an intelligent man would be unwilling to accept as representative of his own action, whose fault is that? It is the fault of the nation itself, which, not being in the hands of a despot or an oligarchy, being free to control the choice of those who are to sum up and concentrate its action, controls it in such a manner that it allows to be chosen agents so little in its confidence, or so mediocre, or so incompetent, that it thinks the best thing to be done with them is to reduce their action as near as possible to a nullity. Hesitating, blundering, unintelligent, inefficacious, the action of the State may be; but, such as it is, it is the collective action of the nation itself, and the nation is responsible for it. It is our own action which we suffer to be thus unsatisfactory. Nothing can free us from this responsibility. The conduct of our affairs is in our own power. To carry on into its executive proceedings the indecision, conflict, and discordance of its parliamentary debates, may be a natural defect of a free nation, but it is certainly a defect; it is a dangerous error to call it, as some do, a perfection. The want of concert, reason, and organisation in the State, is the want of concert, reason, and organisation in the collective nation.

Inasmuch, therefore, as collective action is more efficacious than isolated individual efforts, a nation having great and complicated matters to deal with must greatly gain by employing the action of the State. Only, the State-power which it employs should be a power which really represents its best self, and whose action its intelligence and justice can heartily avow and adopt; not a power which reflects its inferior self, and of whose action, as of its own second-rate action, it has perpetually to be ashamed. To offer a worthy initiative, and to set a standard of rational and equitable action, — this is what the nation should expect of the State; and the more the State fulfils this expectation, the more will it be accepted in practice for what in idea it must always be.

People will not then ask the State, what title it has to commend or reward genius and merit, since commendation and reward imply an attitude of superiority, for it will then be felt that the State truly acts for the English nation; and the genius of the English nation is greater than the genius of any individual, greater even than Shakspeare's genius, for it includes the genius of Newton also.

I will not deny that to give a more prominent part to the State would be a considerable change in this country; that maxims once very sound, and habits once very salutary, may be appealed to against it. The sole question is, whether those maxims and habits are sound and salutary at this moment. A yet graver and more difficult change, — to reduce the all-effacing prominence of the State, to give a more prominent part to the individual, — is imperiously presenting itself to other countries. Both are the suggestions of one irresistible force, which is gradually making its way everywhere, removing old conditions and imposing new, altering long-fixed habits, undermining venerable institutions, even modifying national character: *the modern spirit.*

Undoubtedly we are drawing on towards great changes; and for every nation the thing most needful is to discern clearly its own condition, in order to know in what particular way it may best meet them. Openness and flexibility of mind are at such a time the first of virtues. *Be ye perfect*, said the Founder of Christianity; *I count not myself to have apprehended*, said its greatest Apostle. Perfection will never be reached; but to recognise a period of transformation when it comes, and to adapt themselves honestly and rationally to its laws, is perhaps the nearest approach to perfection of which men and nations are capable. No habits or attachments should prevent their trying to do this; nor indeed, in the long run, can they. Human thought, which made all institutions, inevitably saps them, resting only in that which is absolute and eternal.

HEBRAISM AND HELLENISM[1]

Matthew Arnold

This fundamental ground is our preference of doing to thinking. Now this preference is a main element in our nature, and as we study it we find ourselves opening up a number of large questions on every side.

Let me go back for a moment to Bishop Wilson, who says: "First, never go against the best light you have; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness." We show, as a nation, laudable energy and persistence in walking according to the best light we have, but are not quite careful enough, perhaps, to see that our light be not darkness. This is only another version of the old story that energy is our strong point and favourable characteristic, rather than intelligence. But we may give to this idea a more general form still, in which it will have a yet larger range of application. We may regard this energy driving at practice, this paramount sense of the obligation of duty, self-control, and work, this earnestness in going manfully with the best light we have, as one force. And we may regard the intelligence driving at those ideas which are, after all, the basis of right practice, the ardent sense for all the new and changing combinations of them which man's development brings with it, the indomitable impulse to know and adjust them perfectly, as another force. And these two forces we may regard as in some sense rivals, — rivals not by the necessity of their own nature, but as exhibited in man and his history, — and rivals dividing the empire of the world between them. And to give these forces names from the two races of men who have supplied the most

[1] *Culture and Anarchy*, 1869. Chapter IV.

signal and splendid manifestations of them, we may call them respectively the forces of Hebraism and Hellenism. Hebraism and Hellenism, — between these two points of influence moves our world. At one time it feels more powerfully the attraction of one of them, at another time of the other; and it ought to be, though it never is, evenly and happily balanced between them.

The final aim of both Hellenism and Hebraism, as of all great spiritual disciplines, is no doubt the same: man's perfection or salvation. The very language which they both of them use in schooling us to reach this aim is often identical. Even when their language indicates by variation, — sometimes a broad variation, often a but slight and subtle variation, — the different courses of thought which are uppermost in each discipline, even then the unity of the final end and aim is still apparent. To employ the actual words of that discipline with which we ourselves are all of us most familiar, and the words of which, therefore, come most home to us, that final end and aim is "that we might be partakers of the divine nature." These are the words of a Hebrew apostle, but of Hellenism and Hebraism alike this is, I say, the aim. When the two are confronted, as they very often are confronted, it is nearly always with what I may call a rhetorical purpose; the speaker's whole design is to exalt and enthrone one of the two, and he uses the other only as a foil and to enable him the better to give effect to his purpose. Obviously, with us, it is usually Hellenism which is thus reduced to minister to the triumph of Hebraism. There is a sermon on Greece and the Greek spirit by a man never to be mentioned without interest and respect, Frederick Robertson, in which this rhetorical use of Greece and the Greek spirit, and the inadequate exhibition of them necessarily consequent upon this, is almost ludicrous, and would be censurable if it were not to be explained by the exigencies of a sermon. On the other hand, Heinrich Heine, and other writers of his sort, give us the spectacle of the tables completely turned, and of Hebraism brought in just as a foil and con-

trast to Hellenism, and to make the superiority of Hellenism more manifest. In both these cases there is injustice and misrepresentation. The aim and end of both Hebraism and Hellenism is, as I have said, one and the same, and this aim and end is august and admirable.

Still, they pursue this aim by very different courses. The uppermost idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience. Nothing can do away with this ineffaceable difference. The Greek quarrel with the body and its desires is, that they hinder right thinking; the Hebrew quarrel with them is, that they hinder right acting. "He that keepeth the law, happy is he;" "Blessed is the man that feareth the Eternal, that delighteth greatly in his commandments;" — that is the Hebrew notion of felicity; and, pursued with passion and tenacity, this notion would not let the Hebrew rest till, as is well known, he had at last got out of the law a network of prescriptions to enwrap his whole life, to govern every moment of it, every impulse, every action. The Greek notion of felicity, on the other hand, is perfectly conveyed in these words of a great French moralist: "*C'est le bonheur des hommes*," — when? when they abhor that which is evil? — no; when they exercise themselves in the law of the Lord day and night? — no; when they die daily? — no; when they walk about the New Jerusalem with palms in their hands? — no; but when they think aright, when their thought hits: "*quand ils pensent juste.*" At the bottom of both the Greek and the Hebrew notion is the desire, native in man, for reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order, — in a word, the love of God. But, while Hebraism seizes upon certain plain, capital intimations of the universal order, and rivets itself, one may say, with unequalled grandeur of earnestness and intensity on the study and observance of them, the bent of Hellenism is to follow, with flexible activity, the whole play of the universal order, to be apprehensive of missing any part of it, of

sacrificing one part to another, to slip away from resting in this or that intimation of it, however capital. An unclouded clearness of mind, an unimpeded play of thought, is what this bent drives at. The governing idea of Hellenism is *spontaneity of consciousness;* that of Hebraism, *strictness of conscience.*

Christianity changed nothing in this essential bent of Hebraism to set doing above knowing. Self-conquest, self-devotion, the following not our own individual will, but the will of God, *obedience*, is the fundamental idea of this form, also, of the discipline to which we have attached the general name of Hebraism. Only, as the old law and the network of prescriptions with which it enveloped human life were evidently a motive-power not driving and searching enough to produce the result aimed at, — patient continuance in well-doing, self-conquest, — Christianity substituted for them boundless devotion to that inspiring and affecting pattern of self-conquest offered by Jesus Christ; and by the new motive-power, of which the essence was this, though the love and admiration of Christian churches have for centuries been employed in varying, amplifying, and adorning the plain description of it, Christianity, as St. Paul truly says, "establishes the law," and in the strength of the ampler power which she has thus supplied to fulfil it, has accomplished the miracles, which we all see, of her history.

So long as we do not forget that both Hellenism and Hebraism are profound and admirable manifestations of man's life, tendencies, and powers, and that both of them aim at a like final result, we can hardly insist too strongly on the divergence of line and of operation with which they proceed. It is a divergence so great that it most truly, as the prophet Zechariah says, "has raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece!" The difference whether it is by doing or by knowing that we set most store, and the practical consequences which follow from this difference, leave their mark on all the history of our race and of its development. Language may be abundantly quoted from both

Hellenism and Hebraism to make it seem that one follows the same current as the other towards the same goal. They are, truly, borne towards the same goal; but the currents which bear them are infinitely different. It is true, Solomon will praise knowing: "Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it." And in the New Testament, again, Jesus Christ is a "light," and "truth makes us free." It is true, Aristotle will undervalue knowing: "In what concerns virtue," says he, "three things are necessary — knowledge, deliberate will, and perseverance; but, whereas the two last are all-important, the first is a matter of little importance." It is true that with the same impatience with which St. James enjoins a man to be not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer of the work*, Epictetus exhorts us to *do* what we have demonstrated to ourselves we ought to do; or he taunts us with futility, for being armed at all points to prove that lying is wrong, yet all the time continuing to lie. It is true, Plato, in words which are almost the words of the New Testament or the Imitation, calls life a learning to die. But underneath the superficial agreement the fundamental divergence still subsists. The understanding of Solomon is "the walking in the way of the commandments;" this is "the way of peace," and it is of this that blessedness comes. In the New Testament, the truth which gives us the peace of God and makes us free, is the love of Christ constraining us to crucify, as he did, and with a like purpose of moral regeneration, the flesh with its affections and lusts, and thus establishing, as we have seen, the law. The moral virtues, on the other hand, are with Aristotle but the porch and access to the intellectual, and with these last is blessedness. That partaking of the divine life, which both Hellenism and Hebraism, as we have said, fix as their crowning aim, Plato expressly denies to the man of practical virtue merely, of self-conquest with any other motive than that of perfect intellectual vision. He reserves it for the lover of pure knowledge, of seeing things as they really are, — the φιλομαθής.

Both Hellenism and Hebraism arise out of the wants of human nature, and address themselves to satisfying those wants. But their methods are so different, they lay stress on such different points, and call into being by their respective disciplines such different activities, that the face which human nature presents when it passes from the hands of one of them to those of the other, is no longer the same. To get rid of one's ignorance, to see things as they are, and by seeing them as they are to see them in their beauty, is the simple and attractive ideal which Hellenism holds out before human nature; and from the simplicity and charm of this ideal, Hellenism, and human life in the hands of Hellenism, is invested with a kind of aërial ease, clearness, and radiancy; they are full of what we call sweetness and light. Difficulties are kept out of view, and the beauty and rationalness of the ideal have all our thoughts. "The best man is he who most tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he *is* perfecting himself," — this account of the matter by Socrates, the true Socrates of the *Memorabilia*, has something so simple, spontaneous, and unsophisticated about it, that it seems to fill us with clearness and hope when we hear it. But there is a saying which I have heard attributed to Mr. Carlyle about Socrates, — a very happy saying, whether it is really Mr. Carlyle's or not, — which excellently marks the essential point in which Hebraism differs from Hellenism. "Socrates," this saying goes, "is terribly *at ease in Zion*." Hebraism, — and here is the source of its wonderful strength, — has always been severely preoccupied with an awful sense of the impossibility of being at ease in Zion; of the difficulties which oppose themselves to man's pursuit or attainment of that perfection of which Socrates talks so hopefully, and, as from this point of view one might almost say, so glibly. It is all very well to talk of getting rid of one's ignorance, of seeing things in their reality, seeing them in their beauty; but how is this to be done

when there is something which thwarts and spoils all our efforts?

This something is *sin;* and the space which sin fills in Hebraism, as compared with Hellenism, is indeed prodigious. This obstacle to perfection fills the whole scene, and perfection appears remote and rising away from earth, in the background. Under the name of sin, the difficulties of knowing oneself and conquering oneself which impede man's passage to perfection, become, for Hebraism, a positive, active entity hostile to man, a mysterious power which I heard Dr. Pusey the other day, in one of his impressive sermons, compare to a hideous hunchback seated on our shoulders, and which it is the main business of our lives to hate and oppose. The discipline of the Old Testament may be summed up as a discipline teaching us to abhor and flee from sin; the discipline of the New Testament, as a discipline teaching us to die to it. As Hellenism speaks of thinking clearly, seeing things in their essence and beauty, as a grand and precious feat for man to achieve, so Hebraism speaks of becoming conscious of sin, of awakening to a sense of sin, as a feat of this kind. It is obvious to what wide divergence these differing tendencies, actively followed, must lead. As one passes and repasses from Hellenism to Hebraism, from Plato to St. Paul, one feels inclined to rub one's eyes and ask oneself whether man is indeed a gentle and simple being, showing the traces of a noble and divine nature; or an unhappy chained captive, labouring with groanings that cannot be uttered to free himself from the body of this death.

Apparently it was the Hellenic conception of human nature which was unsound, for the world could not live by it. Absolutely to call it unsound, however, is to fall into the common error of its Hebraising enemies; but it was unsound at that particular moment of man's development, it was premature. The indispensable basis of conduct and self-control, the platform upon which alone the perfection aimed at by Greece can come

into bloom, was not to be reached by our race so easily; centuries of probation and discipline were needed to bring us to it. Therefore the bright promise of Hellenism faded, and Hebraism ruled the world. Then was seen that astonishing spectacle, so well marked by the often-quoted words of the prophet Zechariah, when men of all languages and nations took hold of the skirt of him that was a Jew, saying: — "*We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*" And the Hebraism which thus received and ruled a world all gone out of the way and altogether become unprofitable, was, and could not but be, the later, the more spiritual, the more attractive development of Hebraism. It was Christianity; that is to say, Hebraism aiming at self-conquest and rescue from the thrall of vile affections, not by obedience to the letter of a law, but by conformity to the image of a self-sacrificing example. To a world stricken with moral enervation Christianity offered its spectacle of an inspired self-sacrifice; to men who refused themselves nothing, it showed one who refused himself everything; — "*my Saviour banished joy!*" says George Herbert. When the *alma Venus*, the life-giving and joy-giving power of nature, so fondly cherished by the Pagan world, could not save her followers from self-dissatisfaction and ennui, the severe words of the apostle came bracingly and refreshingly: "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Through age after age and generation after generation, our race, or all that part of our race which was most living and progressive, was *baptized into a death;* and endeavoured, by suffering in the flesh, to cease from sin. Of this endeavour, the animating labours and afflictions of early Christianity, the touching asceticism of mediæval Christianity, are the great historical manifestations. Literary monuments of it, each in its own way incomparable, remain in the Epistles of St. Paul, in St. Augustine's Confessions, and in the two original and simplest books of the Imitation.[1]

[1] The two first books.

Of two disciplines laying their main stress, the one, on clear intelligence, the other, on firm obedience; the one, on comprehensively knowing the grounds of one's duty, the other, on diligently practising it; the one, on taking all possible care (to use Bishop Wilson's words again) that the light we have be not darkness, the other, that according to the best light we have we diligently walk, — the priority naturally belongs to that discipline which braces all man's moral powers, and founds for him an indispensable basis of character. And, therefore, it is justly said of the Jewish people, who were charged with setting powerfully forth that side of the divine order to which the words *conscience* and *self-conquest* point, that they were "entrusted with the oracles of God;" as it is justly said of Christianity, which followed Judaism and which set forth this side with a much deeper effectiveness and a much wider influence, that the wisdom of the old Pagan world was foolishness compared to it. No words of devotion and admiration can be too strong to render thanks to these beneficent forces which have so borne forward humanity in its appointed work of coming to the knowledge and possession of itself; above all, in those great moments when their action was the wholesomest and the most necessary.

But the evolution of these forces, separately and in themselves, is not the whole evolution of humanity, — their single history is not the whole history of man; whereas their admirers are always apt to make it stand for the whole history. Hebraism and Hellenism are, neither of them, the *law* of human development, as their admirers are pronè to make them; they are, each of them, *contributions* to human development, — august contributions, invaluable contributions; and each showing itself to us more august, more invaluable, more preponderant over the other, according to the moment in which we take them, and the relation in which we stand to them. The nations of our modern world, children of that immense and

salutary movement which broke up the Pagan world, inevitably stand to Hellenism in a relation which dwarfs it, and to Hebraism in a relation which magnifies it. They are inevitably prone to take Hebraism as the law of human development, and not as simply a contribution to it, however precious. And yet the lesson must perforce be learned, that the human spirit is wider than the most priceless of the forces which bear it onward, and that to the whole development of man Hebraism itself, is like Hellenism, but a contribution.

Perhaps we may help ourselves to see this clearer by an illustration drawn from the treatment of a single great idea which has profoundly engaged the human spirit, and has given it eminent opportunities for showing its nobleness and energy. It surely must be perceived that the idea of immortality, as this idea rises in its generality before the human spirit, is something grander, truer, and more satisfying, than it is in the particular forms by which St. Paul, in the famous fifteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, and Plato, in the *Phædo*, endeavour to develop and establish it. Surely we cannot but feel, that the argumentation with which the Hebrew apostle goes about to expound this great idea is, after all, confused and inconclusive; and that the reasoning, drawn from analogies of likeness and equality, which is employed upon it by the Greek philosopher, is over-subtle and sterile. Above and beyond the inadequate solutions which Hebraism and Hellenism here attempt, extends the immense and august problem itself, and the human spirit which gave birth to it. And this single illustration may suggest to us how the same thing happens in other cases also.

But meanwhile, by alternations of Hebraism and Hellenism, of a man's intellectual and moral impulses, of the effort to see things as they really are, and the effort to win peace by self-conquest, the human spirit proceeds; and each of these two forces has its appointed hours of culmination and seasons of rule.

As the great movement of Christianity was a triumph of Hebraism and man's moral impulses, so the great movement which goes by the name of the Renascence[1] was an uprising and reinstatement of man's intellectual impulses and of Hellenism. We in England, the devoted children of Protestantism, chiefly know the Renascence by its subordinate and secondary side of the Reformation. The Reformation has been often called a Hebraising revival, a return to the ardour and sincereness of primitive Christianity. No one, however, can study the development of Protestantism and of Protestant churches without feeling that into the Reformation too, — Hebraising child of the Renascence and offspring of its fervour, rather than its intelligence, as it undoubtedly was, — the subtle Hellenic leaven of the Renascence found its way, and that the exact respective parts, in the Reformation, of Hebraism and of Hellenism, are not easy to separate. But what we may with truth say is, that all which Protestantism was to itself clearly conscious of, all which it succeeded in clearly setting forth in words, had the characters of Hebraism rather than of Hellenism. The Reformation was strong, in that it was an earnest return to the Bible and to doing from the heart the will of God as there written. It was weak, in that it never consciously grasped or applied the central idea of the Renascence, — the Hellenic idea of pursuing, in all lines of activity, the law and science, to use Plato's words, of things as they really are. Whatever direct superiority, therefore, Protestantism had over Catholicism was a moral superiority, a superiority arising out of its greater sincerity and earnestness, — at the moment of its apparition at any rate, — in dealing with the heart and conscience. Its pretensions to an intellectual superiority are in general quite illusory. For Hellenism, for the thinking side in

[1] I have ventured to give to the foreign word *Renaissance*, — destined to become of more common use amongst us as the movement which it denotes comes, as it will come, increasingly to interest us, — an English form.

man as distinguished from the acting side, the attitude of mind of Protestantism towards the Bible in no respect differs from the attitude of mind of Catholicism towards the Church. The mental habit of him who imagines that Balaam's ass spoke, in no respect differs from the mental habit of him who imagines that a Madonna of wood or stone winked; and the one, who says that God's Church makes him believe what he believes, and the other, who says that God's Word makes him believe what he believes, are for the philosopher perfectly alike in not really and truly knowing, when they say *God's Church* and *God's Word*, what it is they say, or whereof they affirm.

In the sixteenth century, therefore, Hellenism re-entered the world, and again stood in presence of Hebraism, — a Hebraism renewed and purged. Now, it has not been enough observed, how, in the seventeenth century, a fate befell Hellenism in some respects analogous to that which befell it at the commencement of our era. The Renascence, that great re-awakening of Hellenism, that irresistible return of humanity to nature and to seeing things as they are, which in art, in literature, and in physics, produced such splendid fruits, had, like the anterior Hellenism of the Pagan world, a side of moral weakness and of relaxation or insensibility of the moral fibre, which in Italy showed itself with the most startling plainness, but which in France, England, and other countries was very apparent too. Again this loss of spiritual balance, this exclusive preponderance given to man's perceiving and knowing side, this unnatural defect of his feeling and acting side, provoked a reaction. Let us trace that reaction where it most nearly concerns us.

Science has now made visible to everybody the great and pregnant elements of difference which lie in race, and in how signal a manner they make the genius and history of an Indo-European people vary from those of a Semitic people. Hellenism is of Indo-European growth, Hebraism is of Semitic growth; and we English, a nation of Indo-European stock, seem to belong

naturally to the movement of Hellenism. But nothing more strongly marks the essential unity of man, than the affinities we can perceive, in this point or that, between members of one family of peoples and members of another. And no affinity of this kind is more strongly marked than that likeness in the strength and prominence of the moral fibre, which, notwithstanding immense elements of difference, knits in some special sort the genius and history of us English, and our American descendants across the Atlantic, to the genius and history of the Hebrew people. Puritanism, which has been so great a power in the English nation, and in the strongest part of the English nation, was originally the reaction in the seventeenth century of the conscience and moral sense of our race, against the moral indifference and lax rule of conduct which in the sixteenth century came in with the Renascence. It was a reaction of Hebraism against Hellenism; and it powerfully manifested itself, as was natural, in a people with much of what we call a Hebraising turn, with a signal affinity for the bent which was the master-bent of Hebrew life. Eminently Indo-European by its *humour*, by the power it shows, through this gift, of imaginatively acknowledging the multiform aspects of the problem of life, and of thus getting itself unfixed from its own over-certainty, of smiling at its own over-tenacity, our race has yet (and a great part of its strength lies here), in matters of practical life and moral conduct, a strong share of the assuredness, the tenacity, the intensity of the Hebrews. This turn manifested itself in Puritanism, and has had a great part in shaping our history for the last two hundred years. Undoubtedly it checked and changed amongst us that movement of the Renascence which we see producing in the reign of Elizabeth such wonderful fruits. Undoubtedly it stopped the prominent rule and direct development of that order of ideas which we call by the name of Hellenism, and gave the first rank to a different order of ideas. Apparently, too, as we said of the former

defeat of Hellenism, if Hellenism was defeated, this shows that Hellenism was imperfect, and that its ascendency at that moment would not have been for the world's good.

Yet there is a very important difference between the defeat inflicted on Hellenism by Christianity eighteen hundred years ago, and the check given to the Renascence by Puritanism. The greatness of the difference is well measured by the difference in force, beauty, significance, and usefulness, between primitive Christianity and Protestantism. Eighteen hundred years ago it was altogether the hour of Hebraism. Primitive Christianity was legitimately and truly the ascendant force in the world at that time, and the way of mankind's progress lay through its full development. Another hour in man's development began in the fifteenth century, and the main road of his progress then lay for a time through Hellenism. Puritanism was no longer the central current of the world's progress, it was a side stream crossing the central current and checking it. The cross and the check may have been necessary and salutary, but that does not do away with the essential difference between the main stream of man's advance and a cross or side stream. For more than two hundred years the main stream of man's advance has moved towards knowing himself and the world, seeing things as they are, spontaneity of consciousness; the main impulse of a great part, and that the strongest part, of our nation has been towards strictness of conscience. They have made the secondary the principal at the wrong moment, and the principal they have at the wrong moment treated as secondary. This contravention of the natural order has produced, as such contravention always must produce, a certain confusion and false movement, of which we are now beginning to feel, in almost every direction, the inconvenience. In all directions our habitual causes of action seem to be losing efficaciousness, credit, and control, both with others and even with ourselves. Everywhere we see the beginnings of confusion, and we want a clue

to some sound order and authority. This we can only get by going back upon the actual instincts and forces which rule our life, seeing them as they really are, connecting them with other instincts and forces, and enlarging our whole view and rule of life.

THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM AT THE PRESENT TIME [1]

MATTHEW ARNOLD

MANY objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said: "Of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavour, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires, — criticism"; and that the power and value of English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. And the other day, having been led by a Mr. Shairp's excellent notice of Wordsworth [2] to turn again to his biography, I found, in the

[1] *Essays in Criticism. First Series*, 1865.

[2] I cannot help thinking that a practice, common in England during the last century, and still followed in France, of printing a notice of this kind, — a notice by a competent critic, — to serve as an introduction to an eminent author's works, might be revived among us with advantage. To introduce all succeeding editions of Wordsworth, Mr. Shairp's notice might, it seems to me, excellently serve; it is written from the point of view of an admirer, nay, of a disciple, and that is right; but then the disciple must be also, as in this case he is, a critic, a man of letters, not, as too often happens, some relation or friend with no qualification for his task except affection for his author.

words of this great man, whom I for one, must always listen to with the profoundest respect, a sentence passed on the critic's business, which seems to justify every possible disparagement of it. Wordsworth says in one of his letters: —

"The writers in these publications" (the Reviews), "while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favourable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry."

And a trustworthy reporter of his conversation quotes a more elaborate judgment to the same effect: —

"Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time consumed in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others, a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless."

It is almost too much to expect of poor human nature, that a man capable of producing some effect in one line of literature, should, for the greater good of society, voluntarily doom himself to impotence and obscurity in another. Still less is this to be expected from men addicted to the composition of the "false or malicious criticism" of which Wordsworth speaks. However, everybody would admit that a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written. Everybody, too, would be willing to admit, as a general proposition, that the critical faculty is lower than the inventive. But is it true that criticism is really, in itself, a baneful and injurious employment; is it true that all time given to writing critiques on the works of others would be much better employed if it were given to original composition, of whatever kind this may be? Is it true that Johnson had better have gone on producing more *Irenes* instead of writing his *Lives*

of the Poets; nay, is it certain that Wordsworth himself was better employed in making his Ecclesiastical Sonnets than when he made his celebrated Preface, so full of criticism, and criticism of the works of others? Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes, — not difficult, I think, to be traced, — which may have led Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic may with advantage seize an occasion for trying his own conscience, and for asking himself of what real service at any given moment the practice of criticism either is or may be made to his own mind and spirit, and to the minds and spirits of others.

The critical power is of lower rank than the creative. True; but in assenting to this proposition, one or two things are to be kept in mind. It is undeniable that the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the highest function of man; it is proved to be so by man's finding in it his true happiness. But it is undeniable, also, that men may have the sense of exercising this free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; if it were not so, all but a very few men would be shut out from the true happiness of all men. They may have it in well-doing, they may have it in learning, they may have it even in criticising. This is one thing to be kept in mind. Another is, that the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art, however high this exercise of it may rank, is not at all epochs and under all conditions possible; and that therefore labour may be vainly spent in attempting it, which might with more fruit be used in preparing for it, in rendering it possible. This creative power works with elements, with materials; what if it has

not those materials, those elements, ready for its use? In that case it must surely wait till they are ready. Now, in literature, — I will limit myself to literature, for it is about literature that the question arises, — the elements with which the creative power works are ideas; the best ideas on every matter which literature touches, current at the time. At any rate we may lay it down as certain that in modern literature no manifestation of the creative power not working with these can be very important or fruitful. And I say *current* at the time, not merely accessible at the time; for creative literary genius does not principally show itself in discovering new ideas, that is rather the business of the philosopher. The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations, — making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare, this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power, as I said in the words already quoted, "in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." Thus it tends, at last, to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself. It tends

to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

Or, to narrow our range, and quit these considerations of the general march of genius and of society, — considerations which are apt to become too abstract and impalpable, — every one can see that a poet, for instance, ought to know life and the world before dealing with them in poetry; and life and the world being in modern times very complex things, the creation of a modern poet, to be worth much, implies a great critical effort behind it; else it must be a comparatively poor, barren, and short-lived affair. This is why Byron's poetry had so little endurance in it, and Goethe's so much; both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, and he knew them much more as they really are.

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it in fact something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth

even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he *could* have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is, — his thought richer, and his influence of wider application, — was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

But to speak of books and reading may easily lead to a misunderstanding here. It was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry at this epoch; Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading. Pindar and Sophocles — as we all say so glibly, and often with so little discernment of the real import of what we are saying — had not many books; Shakspeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakspeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive. And this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise, in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand; all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they are helps to this. Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work. This is by no means an equivalent to the artist for the nationally diffused life and thought of the epochs of Sophocles or Shakspeare; but, besides that it may be a means of preparation for such epochs, it does really constitute, if many share in it, a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great value. Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely-combined critical effort

of Germany formed for Goethe, when he lived and worked. There was no national glow of life and thought there as in the Athens of Pericles or the England of Elizabeth. That was the poet's weakness. But there was a sort of equivalent for it in the complete culture and unfettered thinking of a large body of Germans. That was his strength. In the England of the first quarter of this century there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Elizabeth, nor yet a culture and a force of learning and criticism such as were to be found in Germany. Therefore the creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis; a thorough interpretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first sight it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have come a crop of works of genius equal to that which came out of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renascence, with its powerful episode the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. These were, in the main, disinterestedly intellectual and spiritual movements; movements in which the human spirit looked for its satisfaction in itself and in the increased play of its own activity. The French Revolution took a political, practical character. The movement which went on in France under the old *régime*, from 1700 to 1789, was far more really akin than that of the Revolution itself to the movement of the Renascence; the France of Voltaire and Rousseau told far more powerfully upon the mind of Europe than the France of the Revolution. Goethe reproached this last expressly with having "thrown quiet culture back." Nay, and the true key to how much in our Byron, even in our Wordsworth, is this! — that they had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind. The French Revolution, however, — that object

of so much blind love and so much blind hatred, — found undoubtedly its motive-power in the intelligence of men, and not in their practical sense; this is what distinguishes it from the English Revolution of Charles the First's time. This is what makes it a more spiritual event than our Revolution, an event of much more powerful and world-wide interest, though practically less successful; it appeals to an order of ideas which are universal, certain, permanent. 1789 asked of a thing, Is it rational? 1642 asked of a thing, Is it legal? or, when it went furthest, Is it according to conscience? This is the English fashion, a fashion to be treated, within its own sphere, with the highest respect; for its success, within its own sphere, has been prodigious. But what is law in one place is not law in another, what is law here to-day is not law even here to-morrow; and as for conscience, what is binding on one man's conscience is not binding on another's. The old woman who threw her stool at the head of the surpliced minister in St. Gile's Church at Edinburgh obeyed an impulse to which millions of the human race may be permitted to remain strangers. But the prescriptions of reason are absolute, unchanging, of universal validity; *to count by tens is the easiest way of counting* — that is a proposition of which every one, from here to the Antipodes, feels the force; at least I should say so if we did not live in a country where it is not impossible that any morning we may find a letter in the *Times* declaring that a decimal coinage is an absurdity. That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason, and with an ardent zeal for making its prescriptions triumph, is a very remarkable thing, when we consider how little of mind, or anything so worthy and quickening as mind, comes into the motives which alone, in general, impel great masses of men. In spite of the extravagant direction given to this enthusiasm, in spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the

passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas, a unique and still living power; it is — it will probably long remain — the greatest, the most animating event in history. And as no sincere passion for the things of the mind, even though it turn out in many respects an unfortunate passion, is ever quite thrown away and quite barren of good, France has reaped from hers one fruit — the natural and legitimate fruit, though not precisely the grand fruit she expected: she is the country in Europe where *the people* is most alive.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go on for hours. And all we are in the habit of saying on it has undoubtedly a great deal of truth. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world of politics and practice, violently to revolutionise this world to their bidding, — that is quite another thing. There is the world of ideas and there is the world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one, and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day: "That a thing is an anomaly, I consider to be no objection to it whatever." I venture to think he was wrong; that a thing is an anomaly *is* an objection to it, but absolutely and in the sphere of ideas: it is not necessarily, under such and such circumstances, or at such and such a moment, an objection to it in the sphere of politics and practice. Joubert has said beautifully: "C'est la force et le droit qui règlent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit." (Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready.) *Force till right is ready;* and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right, — *right*, so far as we are concerned, *is not*

ready, — until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, should depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it. Therefore for other people enamoured of their own newly discerned right, to attempt to impose it upon us as ours, and violently to substitute their right for our force, is an act of tyranny, and to be resisted. It sets at nought the second great half of our maxim, *force till right is ready*. This was the grand error of the French Revolution; and its movement of ideas, by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere, ran, indeed, a prodigious and memorable course, but produced no such intellectual fruit as the movement of ideas of the Renascence, and created, in opposition to itself, what I may call an *epoch of concentration*. The great force of that epoch of concentration was England; and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French Revolution as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded, and his observation therefore at fault. But on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth. They contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought. It is his accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source

of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. It does not hurt him that Dr. Price and the Liberals were enraged with him; it does not even hurt him that George the Third and the Tories were enchanted with him. His greatness is that he lived in a world which neither English Liberalism nor English Toryism is apt to enter; — the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits. So far is it from being really true of him that he "to party gave up what was meant for mankind," that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, with his sincere conviction of its mischievousness, he can close a memorandum on the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote, — the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December, 1791, — with these striking words: —

"The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, for ever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. *If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate.*"

That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature, or indeed in any literature. That is what I call living by ideas: when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other, — still to be able to think, still to be

irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and, like Balaam, to be unable to speak anything *but what the Lord has put in your mouth.* I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

For the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament, and believes, point-blank, that for a thing to be an anomaly is absolutely no objection to it whatever. He is like the Lord Auckland of Burke's day, who, in a memorandum on the French Revolution, talks of "certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, who have presumed themselves capable of establishing a new system of society." The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice. This would be all very well if the dislike and neglect confined themselves to ideas transported out of their own sphere, and meddling rashly with practice; but they are inevitably extended to ideas as such, and to the whole life of intelligence; practice is everything, a free play of the mind is nothing. The notion of the free play of the mind upon all subjects being a pleasure in itself, being an object of desire, being an essential provider of elements without which a nation's spirit, whatever compensations it may have for them, must, in the long run, die of inanition, hardly enters into an Englishman's thoughts. It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine quality of man's nature, just this disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake, — it is noticeable, I say, that this word has in our language no sense of the kind, no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one. But criticism, real criticism, is essentially the exercise of this very quality. It obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world,

irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever. This is an instinct for which there is, I think, little original sympathy in the practical English nature, and what there was of it has undergone a long benumbing period of blight and suppression in the epoch of concentration which followed the French Revolution.

But epochs of concentration cannot well endure for ever; epochs of expansion, in the due course of things, follow them. Such an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country. In the first place all danger of a hostile forcible pressure of foreign ideas upon our practice has long disappeared; like the traveller in the fable, therefore, we begin to wear our cloak a little more loosely. Then, with a long peace, the ideas of Europe steal gradually and amicably in, and mingle, though in infinitesimally small quantities at a time, with our own notions. Then, too, in spite of all that is said about the absorbing and brutalising influence of our passionate material progress, it seems to me indisputable that this progress is likely, though not certain, to lead in the end to an apparition of intellectual life; and that man, after he has made himself perfectly comfortable and has now to determine what to do with himself next, may begin to remember that he has a mind, and that the mind may be made the source of great pleasure. I grant it is mainly the privilege of faith, at present, to discern this end to our railways, our business, and our fortune-making; but we shall see if, here as elsewhere, faith is not in the end the true prophet. Our ease, our travelling, and our unbounded liberty to hold just as hard and securely as we please to the practice to which our notions have given birth, all tend to beget an inclination to deal a little more freely with these notions themselves, to canvass them a little, to penetrate a little into their real nature. Flutterings of curiosity, in the foreign sense of the word, appear amongst us, and it is in these that

criticism must look to find its account. Criticism first; a time of true creative activity, perhaps, — which, as I have said, must inevitably be preceded amongst us by a time of criticism, — hereafter, when criticism has done its work.

It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word, — *disinterestedness*. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called "the practical view of things"; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them. Else criticism, besides being really false to its own nature, merely continues in the old rut which it has hitherto followed in this country, and will certainly miss the chance now given to it. For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of

those practical ends is all that is wanted. An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing, it may be said, as just an organ for a free play of the mind, we have not. But we have the *Edinburgh Review*, existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of the mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *British Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Times*, existing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society; every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favour. Directly this play of mind wants to have more scope, and to forget the pressure of practical considerations a little, it is checked, it is made to feel the chain. We saw this the other day in the extinction, so much to be regretted, of the *Home and Foreign Review*. Perhaps in no organ of criticism in this country was there so much knowledge, so much play of mind; but these could not save it. The *Dublin Review* subordinates play of mind to the practical business of English and Irish Catholicism, and lives. It must needs be that men should act in sects and parties, that each of these sects and parties should have its organ, and should make this organ subserve the interests of its action; but it would be well, too, that there should be a criticism, not the minister of these interests, not their enemy, but absolutely and entirely independent of them. No other criticism will ever attain any real authority or make any real way towards its end, — the creating a current of true and fresh ideas.

It is because criticism has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice, has been so directly polemical and controversial, that it has so ill accomplished, in this country, its best spiritual work; which is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarising, to lead him toward perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things. A polemical practical criticism makes men blind even to the ideal perfection of their practice, makes them willingly assert its ideal perfection, in order the better to secure it against attack; and clearly this is narrowing and baneful for them. If they were reassured on the practical side, speculative considerations of ideal perfection they might be brought to entertain, and their spiritual horizon would thus gradually widen. Sir Charles Adderley says to the Warwickshire farmers: —

"Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world. . . . The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world."

Mr. Roebuck says to the Sheffield cutlers: —

"I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last."

Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City.

> "Das wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blicke
> Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt — "

says Goethe; "the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do." Clearly this is a better line of reflection for weak humanity, so long as it remains on this earthly field of labour and trial.

But neither Sir Charles Adderley nor Mr. Roebuck is by nature inaccessible to considerations of this sort. They only lose sight of them owing to the controversial life we all lead, and the practical form which all speculation takes with us. They have in view opponents whose aim is not ideal, but practical; and in their zeal to uphold their own practice against these innovators, they go so far as even to attribute to this practice an ideal perfection. Somebody has been wanting to introduce a six-pound franchise, or to abolish church-rates, or to collect agricultural statistics by force, or to diminish local self-government. How natural, in reply to such proposals, very likely improper or ill-timed, to go a little beyond the mark, and to say stoutly, "Such a race of people as we stand, so superior to all the world! The old Anglo-Saxon race, the best breed in the whole world! I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last! I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" And so long as criticism answers this dithyramb by insisting that the old Anglo-Saxon race would be still more superior to all others if it had no church-rates, or that our unrivalled happiness would last yet longer with a six-pound franchise, so long will the strain, "The best breed in the whole world!" swell louder and louder, everything ideal and refining will be lost out of sight, and both the assailed and their critics will remain in a sphere, to say the truth, perfectly unvital, a sphere in which spiritual progression is impossible. But let criticism leave church-rates and the franchise alone, and in the most candid spirit, without a single lurking thought of practical innovation, confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper immediately after reading Mr. Roebuck: —

"A shocking child murder has just been committed at Not-

tingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody."

Nothing but that; but, in juxtaposition with the absolute eulogies of Sir Charles Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquent, how suggestive are those few lines! "Our old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whole world!" — how much that is harsh and ill-favoured there is in this best! *Wragg!* If we are to talk of ideal perfection, of "the best in the whole world," has any one reflected what a touch of grossness in our race, what an original shortcoming in the more delicate spiritual perceptions, is shown by the natural growth amongst us of such hideous names, — Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg! In Ionia and Attica they were luckier in this respect than "the best race in the world"; by the Ilissus there was no Wragg, poor thing! And "our unrivalled happiness"; — what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the workhouse, the dismal Mapperly Hills, — how dismal those who have seen them will remember; — the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! "I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" Perhaps not, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the final touch, — short, bleak, and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody.* The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivalled happiness; or (shall I say?) the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straightforward vigour of our Anglo-Saxon breed! There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. By eluding sterile conflict, by refusing to remain in the sphere where alone narrow and relative conceptions have any worth and validity, criticism may diminish its momentary importance, but only in this way has it a chance of gaining admittance for those wider and more perfect con-

ceptions to which all its duty is really owed. Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody;* but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key.

It will be said that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism, and that, by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment and abandoning the sphere of practical life, it condemns itself to a slow and obscure work. Slow and obscure it may be, but it is the only proper work of criticism. The mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas reposes, and must repose, the general practice of the world. That is as much as saying that whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its own work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as it is in England. But it is only by remaining collected, and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service; and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course, and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him.

For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. But it is not easy to lead a practical man, — unless you reassure him as to your practical intentions, you have

no chance of leading him, — to see that a thing which he has always been used to look at from one side only, which he greatly values, and which, looked at from that side, quite deserves, perhaps, all the prizing and admiring which he bestows upon it, — that this thing, looked at from another side, may appear much less beneficent and beautiful, and yet retain all its claims to our practical allegiance. Where shall we find language innocent enough, how shall we make the spotless purity of our intentions evident enough, to enable us to say to the political Englishman that the British Constitution itself, which, seen from the practical side, looks such a magnificent organ of progress and virtue, seen from the speculative side, — with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theory, its studied avoidance of clear thoughts, — that, seen from this side, our august Constitution sometimes looks, — forgive me, shade of Lord Somers! — a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines? How is Cobbett to say this and not be misunderstood, blackened as he is with the smoke of a lifelong conflict in the field of political practice? how is Mr. Carlyle to say it and not be misunderstood, after his furious raid into this field with his *Latter-day Pamphlets?* how is Mr. Ruskin, after his pugnacious political economy? I say, the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere, if he wants to make a beginning for that more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps one day make its benefits felt even in this sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner.

Do what he will, however, the critic will still remain exposed to frequent misunderstandings, and nowhere so much as in this country. For here people are particularly indisposed even to comprehend that without this free disinterested treatment of things, truth and the highest culture are out of the question. So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt

to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to think of reaching them in any other. "We are all *terræ filii*," cries their eloquent advocate; "all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other course than the course dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organise and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it *the liberal party*, and let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along. If one of us speaks well, applaud him; if one of us speaks ill, applaud him too; we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth." In this way the pursuit of truth becomes really a social, practical, pleasurable affair, almost requiring a chairman, a secretary, and advertisements; with the excitement of an occasional scandal, with a little resistance to give the happy sense of difficulty overcome; but, in general, plenty of bustle and very little thought. To act is so easy, as Gœthe says; to think is so hard! It is true that the critic has many temptations to go with the stream, to make one of the party movement, one of these *terræ filii;* it seems ungracious to refuse to be a *terræ filius*, when so many excellent people are; but the critic's duty is to refuse, or, if resistance is vain, at least to cry with Obermann: *Périssons en résistant.*

How serious a matter it is to try and resist, I had ample opportunity of experiencing when I ventured some time ago to criticise the celebrated first volume of Bishop Colenso.[1] The

[1] So sincere is my dislike to all personal attack and controversy, that I abstain from reprinting, at this distance of time from the occasion which called them forth, the essays in which I criticised Dr. Colenso's book; I feel bound, however, after all that has passed, to make here a final declaration of my sincere impentinence for having published them. Nay, I cannot forbear repeating yet once more, for his benefit and that of his readers, this sentence from my original remarks upon him:

echoes of the storm which was then raised I still, from time to time, hear grumbling round me. That storm arose out of a misunderstanding almost inevitable. It is a result of no little culture to attain to a clear perception that science and religion are two wholly different things. The multitude will for ever confuse them; but happily that is of no great real importance, for while the multitude imagines itself to live by its false science, it does really live by its true religion. Dr. Colenso, however, in his first volume did all he could to strengthen the confusion,[1] and to make it dangerous. He did this with the best intentions, I freely admit, and with the most candid ignorance that this was the natural effect of what he was doing; but, says Joubert, "Ignorance, which in matters of morals extenuates the crime, is itself, in intellectual matters, a crime of the first order." I criticised Bishop Colenso's speculative confusion. Immediately there was a cry raised: "What is this? here is a liberal attacking a liberal. Do not you belong to the movement? are not you a friend of truth? Is not Bishop Colenso in search of truth? then speak with proper respect of his book. Dr. Stanley is another friend of truth, and you speak with proper respect of his book; why make these invidious differences? both books are excellent, admirable, liberal; Bishop Colenso's perhaps the most so, because it is the boldest, and will have the best practical consequences for the liberal cause. Do you want to encourage to the attack of a brother liberal his, and your, and our implacable enemies, the *Church and State Review* or the *Record*, — the High Church rhinoceros and the Evangelical hyæna? Be silent, therefore; or rather speak, speak as loud as ever you can! and go into ecstasies over the eighty and odd pigeons."

There is truth of science and truth of religion; truth of science does not become truth of religion till it is made religious. And I will add: Let us have all the science there is from the men of science; from the men of religion let us have religion.

[1] It has been said I make it "a crime against literary criticism and the higher culture to attempt to inform the ignorant." Need I point out that the ignorant are not informed by being confirmed in a confusion?

But criticism cannot follow this coarse and indiscriminate method. It is unfortunately possible for a man in pursuit of truth to write a book which reposes upon a false conception. Even the practical consequences of a book are to genuine criticism no recommendation of it, if the book is, in the highest sense, blundering. I see that a lady who herself, too, is in pursuit of truth, and who writes with great ability, but a little too much, perhaps, under the influence of the practical spirit of the English liberal movement, classes Bishop Colenso's book and M. Renan's together, in her survey of the religious state of Europe, as facts of the same order, works, both of them, of "great importance"; "great ability, power and skill"; Bishop Colenso's, perhaps, the most powerful; at least, Miss Cobbe gives special expression to her gratitude that to Bishop Colenso "has been given the strength to grasp, and the courage to teach, truths of such deep import." In the same way, more than one popular writer has compared him to Luther. Now it is just this kind of false estimate which the critical spirit is, it seems to me, bound to resist. It is really the strongest possible proof of the low ebb at which, in England, the critical spirit is, that while the critical hit in the religious literature of Germany is Dr. Strauss's book, in that of France M. Renan's book, the book of Bishop Colenso is the critical hit in the religious literature of England. Bishop Colenso's book reposes on a total misconception of the essential elements of the religious problem, as that problem is now presented for solution. To criticism, therefore, which seeks to have the best that is known and thought on this problem, it is, however well meant, of no importance whatever. M. Renan's book attempts a new synthesis of the elements furnished to us by the Four Gospels. It attempts, in my opinion, a synthesis, perhaps premature, perhaps impossible, certainly not successful. Up to the present time, at any rate, we must acquiesce in Fleury's sentence on such recastings of the Gospel-story: *Quiconque s'imagine la pouvoir mieux écrire, ne l'entend*

pas. M. Renan had himself passed by anticipation a like sentence on his own work, when he said: "If a new presentation of the character of Jesus were offered to me, I would not have it; its very clearness would be, in my opinion, the best proof of its insufficiency." His friends may with perfect justice rejoin that at the sight of the Holy Land, and of the actual scene of the Gospel-story, all the current of M. Renan's thoughts may have naturally changed, and a new casting of that story irresistibly suggested itself to him; and that this is just a case for applying Cicero's maxim: Change of mind is not inconsistency — *nemo doctus unquam mutationem consilii inconstantiam dixit esse*. Nevertheless, for criticism, M. Renan's first thought must still be the truer one, as long as his new casting so fails more fully to commend itself, more fully (to use Coleridge's happy phrase about the Bible) to *find* us. Still M. Renan's attempt is, for criticism, of the most real interest and importance, since, with all its difficulty, a fresh synthesis of the New Testament *data*, — not a making war on them, in Voltaire's fashion, not a leaving them out of mind, in the world's fashion, but the putting a new construction upon them, the taking them from under the old, traditional, conventional point of view and placing them under a new one, — is the very essence of the religious problem, as now presented; and only by efforts in this direction can it receive a solution.

Again, in the same spirit in which she judges Bishop Colenso, Miss Cobbe, like so many earnest liberals of our practical race, both here and in America, herself sets vigorously about a positive reconstruction of religion, about making a religion of the future out of hand, or at least setting about making it. We must not rest, she and they are always thinking and saying, in negative criticism, we must be creative and constructive; hence we have such works as her recent *Religious Duty*, and works still more considerable, perhaps, by others, which will be in every one's mind. These works often have much ability; they often spring

out of sincere convictions, and a sincere wish to do good; and they sometimes, perhaps, do good. Their fault is (if I may be permitted to say so) one which they have in common with the British College of Health, in the New Road. Every one knows the British College of Health; it is that building with the lion and the statue of the Goddess Hygeia before it; at least I am sure about the lion, though I am not absolutely certain about the Goddess Hygeia. This building does credit, perhaps, to the resources of Dr. Morrison and his disciples; but it falls a good deal short of one's idea of what a British College of Health ought to be. In England, where we hate public interference and love individual enterprise, we have a whole crop of places like the British College of Health; the grand name without the grand thing. Unluckily, creditable to individual enterprise as they are, they tend to impair our taste by making us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to a public institution. The same may be said of the religions of the future of Miss Cobbe and others. Creditable, like the British College of Health, to the resources of their authors, they yet tend to make us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to religious constructions. The historic religions, with all their faults, have had this; it certainly belongs to the religious sentiment, when it truly flowers, to have this; and we impoverish our spirit if we allow a religion of the future without it. What then is the duty of criticism here? To take the practical point of view, to applaud the liberal movement and all its works, — its New Road religions of the future into the bargain, — for their general utility's sake? By no means; but to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal.

For criticism, these are elementary laws; but they never can be popular, and in this country they have been very little followed, and one meets with immense obstacles in following them. That is a reason for asserting them again and again. Criticism

must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well-meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction, if in the sphere of the ideal they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance. It must be patient, and know how to wait; and flexible, and know how to attach itself to things and how to withdraw from them. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fulness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which in the practical sphere may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings or illusions of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent. And this without any notion of favouring or injuring, in the practical sphere, one power or the other; without any notion of playing off, in this sphere, one power against the other. When one looks, for instance, at the English Divorce Court, — an institution which perhaps has its practical conveniences, but which in the ideal sphere is so hideous; an institution which neither makes divorce impossible nor makes it decent, which allows a man to get rid of his wife, or a wife of her husband, but makes them drag one another first, for the public edification, through a mire of unutterable infamy, — when one looks at this charming institution, I say, with its crowded trials, its newspaper reports, and its money compensations, this institution in which the gross unregenerate British Philistine has indeed stamped an image of himself, — one may be permitted to find the marriage theory of Catholicism refreshing and elevating. Or when Protestantism, in virtue of its supposed rational and intellectual origin, gives the law to criticism too magisterially, criticism may and must remind it that its pretensions, in this respect, are illusive and do it harm; that the Reformation was a moral rather than an intellectual event; that Luther's theory of grace no more exactly reflects the mind of the spirit than Bossuet's philosophy of history reflects it; and that there is no more antecedent probability of the Bishop of

Durham's stock of ideas being agreeable to perfect reason than of Pope Pius the Ninth's. But criticism will not on that account forget the achievements of Protestantism in the practical and moral sphere; nor that, even in the intellectual sphere, Protestantism, though in a blind and stumbling manner, carried forward the Renascence, while Catholicism threw itself violently across its path.

I lately heard a man of thought and energy contrasting the want of ardour and movement which he now found amongst young men in this country with what he remembered in his own youth, twenty years ago. "What reformers we were then!" he exclaimed; "what a zeal we had! how we canvassed every institution in Church and State, and were prepared to remodel them all on first principles!" He was inclined to regret, as a spiritual flagging, the lull which he saw. I am disposed rather to regard it as a pause in which the turn to a new mode of spiritual progress is being accomplished. Everything was long seen, by the young and ardent amongst us, in inseparable connection with politics and practical life. We have pretty well exhausted the benefits of seeing things in this connection, we have got all that can be got by so seeing them. Let us try a more disinterested mode of seeing them; let us betake ourselves more to the serener life of the mind and spirit. This life, too, may have its excesses and dangers; but they are not for us at present. Let us think of quietly enlarging our stock of true and fresh ideas, and not, as soon as we get an idea or half an idea, be running out with it into the street, and trying to make it rule there. Our ideas will, in the end, shape the world all the better for maturing a little. Perhaps in fifty years' time it will in the English House of Commons be an objection to an institution that it is an anomaly, and my friend the Member of Parliament will shudder in his grave. But let us in the meanwhile rather endeavour that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That will be a

change so vast, that the imagination almost fails to grasp it. *Ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.*

If I have insisted so much on the course which criticism must take where politics and religion are concerned, it is because, where these burning matters are in question, it is most likely to go astray. I have wished, above all, to insist on the attitude which criticism should adopt towards things in general; on its right tone and temper of mind. But then comes another question as to the subject-matter which literary criticism should most seek. Here, in general, its course is determined for it by the idea which is the law of its being; the idea of a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas. By the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth, must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides, and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence. The English critic of literature, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him. Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business, and so in some sense it is; but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and thus knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself. And it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it, — but insensibly, and in the second place, not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract lawgiver, — that the critic will generally do most good to his readers. Sometimes, no doubt, for the sake of establishing an author's place in literature, and his relation to a central standard (and if this is not done, how are we to get

at our *best in the world?*) criticism may have to deal with a subject-matter so familiar that fresh knowledge is out of the question, and then it must be all judgment; an enunciation and detailed application of principles. Here the great safeguard is never to let oneself become abstract, always to retain an intimate and lively consciousness of the truth of what one is saying, and, the moment this fails us, to be sure that something is wrong. Still, under all circumstances, this mere judgment and application of principles is, in itself, not the most satisfactory work to the critic; like mathematics, it is tautological, and cannot well give us, like fresh learning, the sense of creative activity.

But stop, some one will say; all this talk is of no practical use to us whatever; this criticism of yours is not what we have in our minds when we speak of criticism; when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day; when you offer to tell criticism its function, it is to this criticism that we expect you to address yourself. I am sorry for it, for I am afraid I must disappoint these expectations. I am bound by my own definition of criticism: *a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.* How much of current English literature comes into this "best that is known and thought in the world"? Not very much, I fear certainly less, at this moment, than of the current literature of France or Germany. Well, then, am I to alter my definition of criticism, in order to meet the requirements of a number of practising English critics, who, after all, are free in their choice of a business? That would be making criticism lend itself just to one of those alien practical considerations, which, I have said, are so fatal to it. One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass — so much better disregarded — of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavour, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world; one may say, that to get

anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own, and the more unlike his own, the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with, — the criticism which alone can much help us for the future, the criticism which, throughout Europe, is at the present day meant, when so much stress is laid on the importance of criticism and the critical spirit, — is a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?

There is so much inviting us! — what are we to take? what will nourish us in growth towards perfection? That is the question which, with the immense field of life and of literature lying before him, the critic has to answer; for himself first, and afterwards for others. In this idea of the critic's business the essays brought together in the following pages have had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning: to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive, and it is not denied to criticism to have it; but then criticism must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity; a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to what he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible.

Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The epochs of Æschylus and Shakspeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is, no doubt, the true life of literature: there is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness; but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries; it will certainly be the best title to esteem with posterity.

THE SPITE OF THE PROUD [1]

"Our soul is filled with the scornful rebuke of the wealthy, and with the despitefulness of the proud."

John Ruskin

(1819–1900)

[Among the many brilliant prose writers — especially ministers to taste and preachers of ideals — who stirred the minds of England and America throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century, none was more versatile, intense, and indefatigable than John Ruskin. In his outraged protest against "the reckless luxury, the deforming mechanism, and the squalid misery of modern cities," in his passionate, and sometimes almost hysterically zealous, denunciation of the absorption of the age in material ends, he was a fighter and prophet of the same order as Carlyle. In his long labor as a writer and lecturer on art, especially painting and architecture, he sought as energetically and with as admirable an endowment as Arnold in the field of literature, to inculcate true and noble standards of appreciation and to increase the ability to enjoy all that is beautiful. He was as keenly alive to spiritual and moral values as Newman, and as stoutly devoted to ideals of conduct as Emerson. He felt and variously expressed, also, the scientific enthusiasm of the age. He traveled more, wrote and talked more than any of his equally distinguished contemporaries, and threw himself into more enterprises for practical reform. Further, he was superbly gifted with power over words and created for himself a prose style unrivaled in its richness and in the verve of its movement.]

During the first half of his career Ruskin was almost exclusively an eager, dogmatic, and somewhat iconoclastic teacher of what he considered the true facts and principles of art. By the time he was thirty-four years old he had published the first two volumes of *Modern Painters*, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and *The Stones of Venice*, all of which set by the ears the art-loving public, and brought upon the ambitious young author a flood of both lavish praise and hostile criticism. The purpose of *The Stones of Venice*

[1] *The Stones of Venice*, Brantwood edition, New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1906. Volume II, Chapter II.

(originally published in 1851–1853), from which the first of the following selections is taken, was "to show that the Gothic architecture of Venice had arisen out of, and indicated in all its features, a state of pure national faith, and of domestic virtue; and that its Renaissance architecture had arisen out of, and in all its features indicated, a state of concealed national infidelity, and of domestic corruption." It was one of Ruskin's cardinal doctrines that no good art can arise or permanently live among a people whose ideals and habits are unsound. In the chapter here selected it was his primary intention to explain that "the grand mistake of the Renaissance schools lay in supposing that science and art were the same things, and that to advance in the one was necessarily to perfect the other." They thought knowledge "the one and the only good," and "never inquired whether men are vivified by it or paralyzed."

The other two selections are lectures delivered early in the second half of Ruskin's career, when, impelled by the moral ardor that underlay all his activity, he had determined to wage war against the general apathy of his time toward the need for noble aims in all life and work, public and private. *Traffic*, first published in 1866 as a part of the volume *The Crown of Wild Olive*, is a courageous diatribe against the worship of the "Goddess of Getting-on," uttered in the very midst of the enemy's camp, a great manufacturing center. "All good architecture," Ruskin continues to insist, "is the expression of national life and character; and it is produced by a prevalent and eager national taste, or desire for beauty" — a taste and desire which cannot be realized until the religion of commercialism is overthrown.

The Mystery of Life and Its Arts, a lecture delivered at Dublin in 1868, is one of the most eloquent and meaningful of all Ruskin's public discourses. With a sadness presaging the gloom of his closing years he confesses the sense of failure that oppresses him as he realizes the indifference of his contemporaries to the doctrines he has so earnestly preached. But again he pleads that men may learn from the useful workers, from the artists above all, how life should be lived, for these teach that beautiful art comes only from a people governed and inspired by noble motive. The recommendations with which the lecture concludes belong characteristically rather to moral injunction than to such prescription as may be made by the science of economics.]

Of all the buildings in Venice, later in date than the final additions to the Ducal Palace, the noblest is, beyond all question, that which, having been condemned by its proprietor, not many years ago, to be pulled down and sold for the value of its materials, was rescued by the Austrian Government, and appropriated — the Government officers having no other use for it — to the business of the Post Office; though still known to the gondolier

by its ancient name, the Casa Grimani. It is composed of three stories of the Corinthian order, at once simple, delicate, and sublime; but on so colossal a scale, that the three-storied palaces on its right and left only reach to the cornice which marks the level of its first floor. Yet it is not at first perceived to be so vast; and it is only when some expedient is employed to hide it from the eye, that by the sudden dwarfing of the whole reach of the Grand Canal, which it commands, we become aware that it is to the majesty of the Casa Grimani that the Rialto itself, and the whole group of neighbouring buildings, owe the greater part of their impressiveness. Nor is the finish of its details less notable than the grandeur of their scale. There is not an erring line, nor a mistaken proportion, throughout its noble front; and the exceeding fineness of the chiselling gives an appearance of lightness to the vast blocks of stone out of whose perfect union that front is composed. The decoration is sparing, but delicate; the first story only simpler than the rest, in that it has pilasters instead of shafts, but all with Corinthian capitals rich in leafage, and fluted delicately; the rest of the walls flat and smooth, and their mouldings sharp and shallow, so that the bold shafts look like crystals of beryl running through a rock of quartz.

This palace is the principal type at Venice, and one of the best in Europe, of the central architecture of the Renaissance schools; that carefully studied and perfectly executed architecture to which these schools owe their principal claims to our respect, and which became the model of most of the important works subsequently produced by civilised nations. I have called it the Roman Renaissance, because it is founded, both in its principles of superimposition, and in the style of its ornament, upon the architecture of classic Rome at its best period. The revival of Latin literature both led to its adoption and directed its form; and the most important example of it which exists is the modern Roman basilica of St. Peter's. It had, at its

Renaissance or new birth, no resemblance either to Greek, Gothic, or Byzantine forms, except in retaining the use of the round arch, vault, and dome; in the treatment of all details, it was exclusively Latin; the last links of connexion with mediæval tradition having been broken by its builders in their enthusiasm for classical art, and the forms of true Greek or Athenian architecture being still unknown to them. The study of these noble Greek forms has induced various modifications of the Renaissance in our own times; but the conditions which are found most applicable to the uses of modern life are still Roman, and the entire style may most fitly be expressed by the term "Roman Renaissance."

It is this style, in its purity and fullest form, — represented by such buildings as the Casa Grimani at Venice (built by San Micheli), the Town Hall at Vicenza (by Palladio), St. Peter's at Rome (by Michael Angelo), St. Paul's and Whitehall in London (by Wren and Inigo Jones), — which is the true antagonist of the Gothic school. The intermediate, or corrupt conditions of it, though multiplied over Europe, are no longer admired by architects, or made the subjects of their study; but the finished work of this central school is still, in most cases, the model set before the student of the nineteenth century, as opposed to those Gothic, Romanesque, or Byzantine forms which have long been considered barbarous, and are so still by most of the leading men of the day. That they are, on the contrary, most noble and beautiful, and that the antagonistic Renaissance is, in the main, unworthy and unadmirable, whatever perfection of a certain kind it may possess, it was my principal purpose to show, when first I undertook the labour of this work. It has been attempted already to put before the reader the various elements which unite in the Nature of Gothic, and to enable him thus to judge, not merely of the beauty of the forms which that system has produced already, but of its future applicability to the wants of mankind, and endless power

over their hearts. I would now endeavour, in like manner, to set before the reader the Nature of Renaissance, and thus to enable him to compare the two styles under the same light, and with the same enlarged view of their relations to the intellect, and capacities for the service, of man.

It will not be necessary for me to enter at length into any examination of its external form. It uses, whether for its roofs of aperture or roofs proper, the low gable or circular arch: but it differs from Romanesque work in attaching great importance to the horizontal lintel or architrave *above* the arch; transferring the energy of the principal shafts to the supporting of this horizontal beam, and thus rendering the arch a subordinate, if not altogether a superfluous, feature. I might insist at length upon the absurdity of a construction in which the shorter shaft, which has the real weight of wall to carry, is split into two by the taller one, which has nothing to carry at all, — that taller one being strengthened, nevertheless, as if the whole weight of the building bore upon it; and on the ungracefulness, never conquered in any Palladian work, however loaded the spandrels might be with sculpture, of the two half-capitals glued, as it were, against the slippery round sides of the central shaft. But it is not the form of this architecture against which I would plead. Its defects are shared by many of the noblest forms of earlier building, and might have been entirely atoned for by excellence of spirit. But it is the moral nature of it which is corrupt, and which it must, therefore, be our principal business to examine and expose.

The moral, or immoral, elements which unite to form the spirit of Central Renaissance architecture are, I believe, in the main, two, — Pride and Infidelity; but the pride resolves itself into three main branches, — Pride of Science, Pride of State, and Pride of System: and thus we have four separate mental conditions which must be examined successively.

1. *Pride of Science.* — It would have been more chari-

table, but more confusing, to have added another element to our list, namely the *Love* of Science; but the love is included in the pride, and is usually so very subordinate an element, that it does not deserve equality of nomenclature. But, whether pursued in pride or in affection (how far by either we shall see presently), the first notable characteristic of the Renaissance central school is its introduction of accurate knowledge into all its work, so far as it possesses such knowledge; and its evident conviction that such science is necessary to the excellence of the work, and is the first thing to be expressed therein. So that all the forms introduced, even in its minor ornament, are studied with the utmost care; the anatomy of all animal structure is thoroughly understood and elaborately expressed, and the whole of the execution skilful and practised in the highest degree. Perspective, linear, and aërial, perfect drawing and accurate light and shade in painting, and true anatomy in all representations of the human form, drawn or sculptured, are the first requirements in all the work of this school. Now, first considering all this in the most charitable light, as pursued from a real love of truth, and not from vanity, it would, of course, have been all excellent and admirable, had it been regarded as the aid of art, and not as its essence. But the grand mistake of the Renaissance schools lay in supposing that science and art were the same things, and that to advance in the one was necessarily to perfect the other. Whereas they are, in reality, things not only different, but so opposed that to advance in the one is, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, to retrograde in the other. This is the point to which I would at present especially bespeak the reader's attention.

Science and art are commonly distinguished by the nature of their actions; the one as knowing, the other as changing, producing, or creating. But there is a still more important distinction in the nature of the things they deal with. Science deals exclusively with things as they are in themselves; and art

exclusively with things as they affect the human senses and human soul.[1] Her work is to portray the appearances of things, and to deepen the natural impressions which they produce upon living creatures. The work of science is to substitute facts for appearances, and demonstrations for impressions. Both, observe, are equally concerned with truth; the one with truth of aspect, the other with truth of essence. Art does not represent things falsely, but truly as they appear to mankind. Science studies the relations of things to each other; but art studies only their relations to man; and it requires of everything which is submitted to it imperatively this, and only this, — what that thing is to the human eyes and human heart, what it has to say to men, and what it can become to them: a field of question just as much vaster than that of science, as the soul is larger than the material creation.

Take a single instance. Science informs us that the sun is ninety-five millions of miles distant from, and 111 times broader than, the earth: that we and all the planets revolve round it; and that it revolves on its own axis in 25 days, 14 hours, and 4 minutes. With all this, art has nothing whatsoever to do. It has no care to know anything of this kind. But the things which it does care to know are these: that in the heavens God hath set a tabernacle for the sun, "which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

This, then, being the kind of truth with which art is exclusively concerned, how is such truth as this to be ascertained and accumulated? Evidently, and only, by perception and feeling.

[1] Or, more briefly, science has to do with facts, art with phenomena. To science, phenomena are of use only as they lead to facts; and to art, facts are of use only as they lead to phenomena. I use the word "art" here with reference to the fine arts only, for the lower arts of mechanical production I should reserve the word "manufacture."

Never either by reasoning or report. Nothing must come between Nature and the artist's sight; nothing between God and the artist's soul. Neither calculation nor hearsay, — be it the most subtle of calculations, or the wisest of sayings, — may be allowed to come between the universe, and the witness which art bears to its visible nature. The whole value of that witness depends on its being *eye*-witness; the whole genuineness, acceptableness, and dominion of it depend on the personal assurance of the man who utters it. All its victory depends on the veracity of the one preceding word, "Vidi."

The whole function of the artist in the world is to be a seeing and feeling creature; to be an instrument of such tenderness and sensitiveness, that no shadow, no hue, no line, no instantaneous and evanescent expression of the visible things around him, nor any of the emotions which they are capable of conveying to the spirit which has been given him, shall either be left unrecorded, or fade from the book of record. It is not his business either to think, to judge, to argue, or to know. His place is neither in the closet, nor on the bench, nor at the bar, nor in the library. They are for other men and other work. He may think, in a by-way; reason, now and then, when he has nothing better to do; know, such fragments of knowledge as he can gather without stooping, or reach without pains; but none of these things are to be his care. The work of his life is to be twofold only; to see, to feel.

Nay, but, the reader perhaps pleads with me, one of the great uses of knowledge is to open the eyes; to make things perceivable which never would have been seen, unless first they had been known.

Not so. This could only be said or believed by those who do not know what the perceptive faculty of a great artist is, in comparison with that of other men. There is no great painter, no great workman in any art, but he sees more with the glance of the moment than he could learn by the labour of a thousand hours.

God has made every man fit for his work: He has given to the man whom He means for a student, the reflective, logical, sequential faculties; and to the man whom He means for an artist, the perceptive, sensitive, retentive faculties. And neither of these men, so far from being able to do the other's work, can even comprehend the way in which it is done. The student has no understanding of the vision, nor the painter of the process; but chiefly, the student has no idea of the colossal grasp of the true painter's vision and sensibility.

The labour of the whole Geological Society, for the last fifty years, has but now arrived at the ascertainment of those truths respecting mountain form which Turner saw and expressed with a few strokes of a camel's hair pencil fifty years ago, when he was a boy. The knowledge of all the laws of the planetary system, and of all the curves of the motion of projectiles, would never enable the man of science to draw a waterfall or a wave; and all the members of Surgeons' Hall helping each other could not at this moment see, or represent, the natural movement of a human body in vigorous action, as a poor dyer's son did two hundred years ago.[1]

"Well but," still answers the reader, "on the whole, the gain is greater than the loss, and the fact is, that a picture of the Renaissance period, or by a modern master, does indeed represent Nature more faithfully than one wrought in the ignorance of old times." No, not one whit; for the most part, less faithfully. Indeed, the outside of Nature is more truly drawn; the material commonplace, which can be systematized, catalogued, and taught to all painstaking mankind, — forms of ribs and scapulæ, of eyebrows and lips, and curls of hair. Whatever can be measured and handled, dissected and demonstrated, — in a word, whatever is of the body only, — that the schools of knowledge do resolutely and courageously possess themselves of, and portray. But whatever is immeasurable,

[1] Tintoret.

intangible, indivisible, and of the spirit, that the schools of knowledge do as certainly lose, and blot out of their sight: that is to say, all that is worth art's possessing or recording at all; for whatever can be arrested, measured, and systematized, we can contemplate as much as we will in Nature herself. But what we want art to do for us is to stay what is fleeting, and to enlighten what is incomprehensible, to incorporate the things that have no measure, and immortalize the things that have no duration. The dimly seen, momentary glance, the flitting shadow of faint emotion, the imperfect lines of fading thought, and all that by and through such things as these is recorded on the features of man, and all that in man's person and actions, and in the great natural world, is infinite and wonderful; having in it that spirit and power which man may witness, but not weigh; conceive, but not comprehend; love, but not limit; and imagine, but not define; — this, the beginning and the end of the aim of all noble art, we have, in the ancient art, by perception; and we have *not*, in the newer art, by knowledge. Giotto gives it us; Orcagna gives it us; Angelico, Memmi, Pisano, — it matters not who, — all simple and unlearned men, in their measure and manner, — give it us; and the learned men that followed them give it us not, and we, in our supreme learning, own ourselves at this day farther from it than ever.

"Nay," but it is still answered, "this is because we have not yet brought our knowledge into right use, but have been seeking to accumulate it, rather than to apply it wisely to the ends of art. Let us now do this, and we may achieve all that was done by that elder ignorant art, and infinitely more." No, not so; for as soon as we try to put our knowledge to good use, we shall find that we have much more than we can use, and that what more we have is an encumbrance. All our errors in this respect arise from a gross misconception as to the true nature of knowledge itself. We talk of learned and ignorant men, as if there were a certain quantity of knowledge,

which to possess was to be learned, and which not to possess was to be ignorant; instead of considering that knowledge is infinite, and that the man most learned in human estimation is just as far from knowing anything as he ought to know it, as the unlettered peasant. Men are merely on a lower or higher stage of an eminence, whose summit is God's throne, infinitely above all; and there is just as much reason for the wisest as for the simplest man being discontented with his position, as respects the real quantity of knowledge he possesses. And, for both of them, the only true reasons for contentment with the sum of knowledge they possess are these: that it is the kind of knowledge they need for their duty and happiness in life; that all they have is tested and certain, so far as it is in their power; that all they have is well in order, and within reach when they need it; that it has not cost too much time in the getting; that none of it, once got, has been lost; and that there is not too much to be easily taken care of.

Consider these requirements a little, and the evils that result in our education and policy from neglecting them. Knowledge is mental food, and is exactly to the spirit what food is to the body (except that the spirit needs several sorts of food, of which knowledge is only one), and it is liable to the same kind of misuses. It may be mixed and disguised by art, till it becomes unwholesome; it may be refined, sweetened, and made palatable, until it has lost all its power of nourishment; and, even of its best kind, it may be eaten to surfeiting, and minister to disease and death.

Therefore, with respect to knowledge, we are to reason and act exactly as with respect to food. We no more live to know, than we live to eat. We live to contemplate, enjoy, act, adore: and we may know all that is to be known in this world, and what Satan knows in the other, without being able to do any of these. We are to ask, therefore, first, is the knowledge we would have fit food for us, good and simple, not artificial and

decorated? and secondly, how much of it will enable us best for our work; and will leave our hearts light, and our eyes clear? For no more than that is to be eaten without the old Eve-sin.

Observe, also, the difference between tasting knowledge, and hoarding it. In this respect it is also like food; since, in some measure, the knowledge of all men is laid up in granaries, for future use; much of it is at any moment dormant, not fed upon or enjoyed, but in store. And by all it is to be remembered, that knowledge in this form may be kept without air till it rots, or in such unthreshed disorder that it is of no use; and that, however good or orderly, it is still only in being tasted that it becomes of use: and that men may easily starve in their own granaries, men of science, perhaps, most of all, for they are likely to seek accumulation of their store, rather than nourishment from it. Yet let it not be thought that I would undervalue them. The good and great among them are like Joseph, to whom all nations sought to buy corn; or like the sower going forth to sow beside all waters, sending forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass: only let us remember that this is not all men's work. We are not intended to be all keepers of granaries, nor all to be measured by the filling of the storehouse; but many, nay, most of us, are to receive day by day our daily bread, and shall be as well nourished and as fit for our labour, and often, also, fit for nobler and more divine labour, in feeding from the barrel of meal that does not waste and from the cruse of oil that does not fail, than if our barns were filled with plenty, and our presses bursting out with new wine.

It is for each man to find his own measure in this matter; in great part, also, for others to find it for him, while he is yet a youth. And the desperate evil of the whole Renaissance system is, that all idea of measure is therein forgotten, that knowledge is thought the one and only good, and it is never inquired whether men are vivified by it or paralyzed. Let us leave figures. The reader may not believe the analogy I have

been pressing so far; but let him consider the subject in itself, let him examine the effect of knowledge in his own heart, and see whether the trees of knowledge and of life are one now, any more than in Paradise. He must feel that the real animating power of knowledge is only in the moment of its being first received, when it fills us with wonder and joy; a joy for which, observe, the previous ignorance is just as necessary as the present knowledge. That man is always happy who is in the presence of something which he cannot know to the full, which he is always going to know. This is the necessary condition of a finite creature with divinely rooted and divinely directed intelligence; this, therefore, its happy state, — but observe, a state, not of triumph or joy in what it knows, but of joy rather in the continual discovery of new ignorance, continual self-abasement, continual astonishment. Once thoroughly our own, the knowledge ceases to give us pleasure. It may be practically useful to us, it may be good for others, or good for usury to obtain more; but, in itself, once let it be thoroughly familiar, and it is dead. The wonder is gone from it, and all the fine colour which it had when first we drew it up out of the infinite sea. And what does it matter how much or how little of it we have laid aside, when our only enjoyment is still in the casting of that deep-sea line? What does it matter? Nay, in one respect, it matters much, and not to our advantage. For one effect of knowledge is to deaden the force of the imagination and the original energy of the whole man: under the weight of his knowledge he cannot move so lightly as in the days of his simplicity. The packhorse is furnished for the journey, the war-horse is armed for war; but the freedom of the field and the lightness of the limb are lost for both. Knowledge is, at best, the pilgrim's burden or the soldier's panoply, often a weariness to them both; and the Renaissance knowledge is like the Renaissance armour of plate, binding and cramping the human form; while all good knowledge is like the crusader's chain mail, which throws itself

into folds with the body, yet it is rarely so forged as that the clasps and rivets do not gall us. All men feel this, though they do not think of it, nor reason out its consequences. They look back to the days of childhood as of greatest happiness, because those were the days of greatest wonder, greatest simplicity, and most vigorous imagination. And the whole difference between a man of genius and other men, it has been said a thousand times, and most truly, is that the first remains in great part a child, seeing with the large eyes of children, in perpetual wonder, not conscious of much knowledge, — conscious, rather, of infinite ignorance, and yet infinite power; a fountain of eternal admiration, delight, and creative force within him, meeting the ocean of visible and governable things around him.

That is what we have to make men, so far as we may. All are to be men of genius in their degree, — rivulets or rivers, it does not matter so that the souls be clear and pure; not dead walls encompassing dead heaps of things known and numbered, but running waters in the sweet wilderness of things unnumbered and unknown, conscious only of the living banks, on which they partly refresh and partly reflect the flowers, and so pass on.

Let each man answer for himself how far his knowledge has made him this, or how far it is loaded upon him as the pyramid is upon the tomb. Let him consider, also, how much of it has cost him labour and time and might have been spent in healthy, happy action, beneficial to all mankind; how many living souls may have been left uncomforted and unhelped by him, while his own eyes were failing by the midnight lamp; how many warm sympathies have died within him as he measured lines or counted letters; how many draughts of ocean air, and steps on mountain turf, and openings of the highest heaven he has lost for his knowledge; how much of that knowledge, so dearly bought, is now forgotten or despised, leaving only the capacity of wonder less within him, and, as it happens in a thousand instances, perhaps even also the capacity of devo-

tion. And let him, — if, after thus dealing with his own heart, he can say that his knowledge has indeed been fruitful to him, — yet consider how many there are who have been forced by the inevitable laws of modern education into toil utterly repugnant to their natures, and that in the extreme, until the whole strength of the young soul was sapped away; and then pronounce with fearfulness how far, and in how many senses, it may indeed be true that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Now all this possibility of evil, observe, attaches to knowledge pursued for the noblest ends, if it be pursued imprudently. I have assumed, in speaking of its effect both on men generally and on the artist especially, that it was sought in the true love of it, and with all honesty and directness of purpose. But this is granting far too much in its favour. Of knowledge in general, and without qualification, it is said by the Apostle that "it puffeth up;" and the father of all modern science, writing directly in its praise, yet asserts this danger even in more absolute terms, calling it a "venomousness" in the very nature of knowledge itself.

There is, indeed, much difference in this respect between the tendencies of different branches of knowledge; it being a sure rule that exactly in proportion as they are inferior, nugatory, or limited in scope, their power of feeding pride is greater. Thus philology, logic, rhetoric, and the other sciences of the schools, being for the most part ridiculous and trifling, have so pestilent an effect upon those who are devoted to them, that their students cannot conceive of any higher sciences than these, but fancy that all education ends in the knowledge of words: but the true and great sciences, more especially natural history, make men gentle and modest in proportion to the largeness of their apprehension, and just perception of the infiniteness of the things they can never know. And this, it seems to me, is the principal lesson we are intended to be taught by the book of Job; for there God has thrown open to us the heart of a

man most just and holy, and apparently perfect in all things possible to human nature except humility. For this he is tried: and we are shown that no suffering, no self-examination, however honest, however stern, no searching out of the heart by its own bitterness, is enough to convince man of his nothingness before God; but that the sight of God's creation will do it. For, when the Deity Himself has willed to end the temptation, and to accomplish in Job that for which it was sent, He does not vouchsafe to reason with him, still less does He overwhelm him with terror, or confound him by laying open before his eyes the book of his iniquities. He opens before him only the arch of the dayspring, and the fountains of the deep; and amidst the covert of the reeds, and on the heaving waves, He bids him watch the kings of the children of pride, — "Behold now Behemoth, which I made with thee." And the work is done.

Thus, if, I repeat, there is any one lesson in the whole book which stands forth more definitely than another, it is this of the holy and humbling influence of natural science on the human heart. And yet, even here, *it is not the science, but the perception*, to which the good is owing; and the natural sciences may become as harmful as any others, when they lose themseives in classification and catalogue-making.[1] Still, the principal danger is with the sciences of words and methods; and it was exactly into those sciences that the whole energy of men during the Renaissance period was thrown. They discovered suddenly that the world for ten centuries had been living in an ungrammatical manner, and they made it forthwith the end of human existence to be grammatical. And it mattered thenceforth nothing what was said, or what was done, so only that it was said with scholarship, and done with system. Falsehood in a

[1] [I had not at this time conceived the possibility of their losing themselves in the contemplation of Death instead of life; and becoming the Bigots of Corruption. I have italicized the pregnant sentence above.]

Ciceronian dialect had no opposers; truth in patois no listeners. A Roman phrase was thought worthy any number of Gothic facts. The sciences ceased at once to be anything more than different kinds of grammars, — grammar of language, grammar of logic, grammar of ethics, grammar of art; and the tongue, wit, and invention of the human race were supposed to have found their utmost and most divine mission in syntax and syllogism, perspective and five orders.

Of such knowledge as this, nothing but pride could come; and, therefore, I have called the first mental characteristic of the Renaissance schools the "pride" of science. If they had reached any science worthy the name, they might have loved it; but of the paltry knowledge they possessed they could only be proud. There was not anything in it capable of being loved. Anatomy, indeed, then first made a subject of accurate study, is a true science, but not so attractive as to enlist the affections strongly on its side: and therefore, like its meaner sisters, it became merely a ground of pride; and the one main purpose of the Renaissance artists, in all their work, was to show how much they knew.

There were, of course, noble exceptions; but chiefly belonging to the earliest periods of the Renaissance, when its teaching had not yet produced its full effect. Raphael, Leonardo, and Michael Angelo were all trained in the old school; they all had masters who knew the true ends of art, and had reached them; masters nearly as great as they were themselves, but imbued with the old religious and earnest spirit, which their disciples receiving from them, and drinking at the same time deeply from all the fountains of knowledge opened in their day, became the world's wonders. Then the dull wondering world believed that their greatness rose out of their new knowledge, instead of out of that ancient religious root, in which to abide was life, from which to be severed was annihilation. And from that day to this, they have tried to produce Michael Angelos

and Leonardos by teaching the barren sciences, and still have mourned and marvelled that no more Michael Angelos came; not perceiving that those great Fathers were only able to receive such nourishment because they were rooted on the rock of all ages, and that our scientific teaching, nowadays, is nothing more nor less than the assiduous watering of trees whose stems are cut through. Nay, I have even granted too much in saying that those great men were able to receive pure nourishment from the sciences; for my own conviction is, and I know it to be shared by most of those who love Raphael truly, — that he painted best when he knew least. Michael Angelo was betrayed, again and again, into such vain and offensive exhibition of his anatomical knowledge as, to this day, renders his higher powers indiscernible by the greater part of men; and Leonardo fretted his life away in engineering, so that there is hardly a picture left to bear his name. But, with respect to all who followed, there can be no question that the science they possessed was utterly harmful; serving merely to draw away the hearts at once from the purposes of art and the power of nature, and to make, out of the canvas and marble, nothing more than materials for the exhibition of petty dexterity and useless knowledge.

It is sometimes amusing to watch the naive and childish way in which this vanity is shown. For instance, when perspective was first invented, the world thought it a mighty discovery, and the greatest men then alive were as proud of knowing that retiring lines converge, as if all the wisdom of Solomon had been compressed into a vanishing point. And, accordingly, it became nearly impossible for any one to paint a Nativity, but he must turn the stable and manger into a Corinthian arcade, in order to show his knowledge of perspective; and half the best architecture of the time, instead of being adorned with historical sculpture, as of old, was set forth with bas-relief of minor corridors and galleries, thrown into perspective.

Now, when perspective can be taught to any schoolboy in a

week, we can smile at this vanity. But the fact is, that all pride in knowledge is precisely as ridiculous, whatever its kind, or whatever its degree. There is, indeed, nothing of which man has any right to be proud; but the very last thing of which, with any shadow of reason, he can make his boast is his knowledge, except only that infinitely small portion of it which he has discovered for himself. For what is there to be more proud of in receiving a piece of knowledge from another person, than in receiving a piece of money? Beggars should not be proud, whatever kind of alms they receive. Knowledge is like current coin. A man may have some right to be proud of possessing it, if he has worked for the gold of it, and assayed it, and stamped it, so that it may be received of all men as true; or earned it fairly being already assayed; but if he has done none of these things, but only had it thrown in his face by a passer-by, what cause has he to be proud? And though, in this mendicant fashion, he had heaped together the wealth of Crœsus, would pride any more, for this, become him, as, in some sort, it becomes the man who has laboured for his fortune, however small? So, if a man tells me the sun is larger than the earth, have I any cause for pride in knowing it, or, if any multitude of men tell me any number of things, heaping all their wealth of knowledge upon me, have I any reason to feel proud under the heap? And is not nearly all the knowledge of which we boast in these days cast upon us in this dishonourable way; worked for by other men, proved by them, and then forced upon us, even against our wills, and beaten into us in our youth, before we have the wit even to know if it be good or not? Truly a noble possession to be proud of! Be assured, there is no part of the furniture of a man's mind which he has a right to exult in, but that which he has hewn and fashioned for himself. He who has built himself a hut on a desert heath, and carved his bed, and table, and chair out of the nearest forest, may have some right to take pride in the appliances of his narrow chamber, as assuredly he will have

joy in them. But the man who has had a palace built, and adorned, and furnished for him, may, indeed, have many advantages above the other, but he has no reason to be proud of his upholsterer's skill; and it is ten to one if he has half the joy in his couches of ivory that the other will have in his pallet of pine.

And observe how we feel this, in the kind of respect we pay to such knowledge as we are indeed capable of estimating the value of. When it is our own, and new to us, we cannot judge of it; but let it be another's also, and long familiar to us, and see what value we set on it. Consider how we regard a schoolboy fresh from his term's labour. If he begin to display his newly acquired small knowledge to us, and plume himself thereupon, how soon do we silence him with contempt! But it is not so if the schoolboy begins to feel or see anything. In the strivings of his soul within him he is our equal; in his power of sight and thought he stands separate from us, and may be a greater than we. We are ready to hear him forthwith. "You saw that? you felt that? No matter for your being a child; let us hear."

Consider that every generation of men stands in this relation to its successors. It is as the schoolboy: the knowledge of which it is proudest will be as the alphabet to those who follow. It had better make no noise about its knowledge; a time will come when its utmost, in that kind, will be food for scorn. Poor fools! was that all they knew? and behold how proud they were! But what we see and feel will never be mocked at. All men will be thankful to us for telling them that. "Indeed!" they will say, "they felt that in their day? saw that? Would God we may be like them, before we go to the home where sight and thought are not!"

This unhappy and childish pride in knowledge, then, was the first constituent element of the Renaissance mind, and it was enough, of itself, to have cast it into swift decline: but it was

aided by another form of pride, which was above called the Pride of State; and which we have next to examine.

2. *Pride of State.* — It was noticed, in the second volume of *Modern Painters*, that the principle which had most power in retarding the modern school of portraiture was its constant expression of individual vanity and pride. And the reader cannot fail to have observed that one of the readiest and commonest ways in which the painter ministers to this vanity is by introducing the pedestal or shaft of a column, or some fragment, however simple, of Renaissance architecture, in the background of the portrait. And this is not merely because such architecture is bolder or grander than, in general, that of the apartments of a private house. No other architecture would produce the same effect in the same degree. The richest Gothic, the most massive Norman, would not produce the same sense of exaltation as the simple and meagre lines of the Renaissance.

And if we think over this matter a little, we shall soon feel that in those meagre lines there is indeed an expression of aristocracy in its worst characters; coldness, perfectness of training, incapability of emotion, want of sympathy with the weakness of lower men, blank, hopeless, haughty self-sufficiency. All these characters are written in the Renaissance architecture as plainly as if they were graven on it in words. For, observe, all other architectures have something in them that common men can enjoy; some concession to the simplicities of humanity, some daily bread for the hunger of the multitude. Quaint fancy, rich ornament, bright colour, something that shows a sympathy with men of ordinary minds and hearts; and this wrought out, at least in the Gothic, with a rudeness showing that the workman did not mind exposing his own ignorance if he could please others. But the Renaissance is exactly the contrary of all this. It is rigid, cold, inhuman; incapable of glowing, of stooping, of conceding for an instant. Whatever excellence

it has is refined, high-trained, and deeply erudite; a kind which the architect well knows no common mind can taste. He proclaims it to us aloud. "You cannot feel my work unless you study Vitruvius. I will give you no gay colour, no pleasant sculpture, nothing to make you happy; for I am a learned man. All the pleasure you can have in anything I do is in its proud breeding, its rigid formalism, its perfect finish, its cold tranquillity. I do no work for the vulgar, only for the men of the academy and the court."

And the instinct of the world felt this in a moment. In the new precision and accurate law of the classical forms, they perceived something peculiarly adapted to the setting forth of state in an appalling manner: princes delighted in it, and courtiers. The Gothic was good for God's worship, but this was good for man's worship. The Gothic had fellowship with all hearts, and was universal, like nature: it could frame a temple for the prayer of nations, or shrink into the poor man's winding stair. But here was an architecture that would not shrink, that had in it no submission, no mercy. The proud princes and lords rejoiced in it. It was full of insult to the poor in its every line. It would not be built of the materials at the poor man's hand; it would not roof itself with thatch or shingle and black oak beams; it would not wall itself with rough stone or brick; it would not pierce itself with small windows where they were needed; it would not niche itself, wherever there was room for it, in the street corners. It would be of hewn stone; it would have its windows and its door, and its stairs and its pillars, in lordly order and of stately size; it would have its wings and its corridors, and its halls and its gardens, as if all the earth were its own. And the rugged cottages of the mountaineers, and the fantastic streets of the labouring burgher, were to be thrust out of its way, as of a lower species.

It is to be noted, also, that it ministered as much to luxury as to pride. Not to luxury of the eye; that is a holy luxury:

Nature ministers to that in her painted meadows, and sculptured forests, and gilded heavens; the Gothic builder ministered to that in his twisted traceries, and deep-wrought foliage, and burning casements. The dead Renaissance drew back into its earthliness, out of all that was warm and heavenly; back into its pride, out of all that was simple and kind; back into its stateliness, out of all that was impulsive, reverent, and gay. But it understood the luxury of the body; the terraced and scented and grottoed garden, with its trickling fountains and slumbrous shades; the spacious hall and lengthened corridor for the summer heat; the well-closed windows, and perfect fittings and furniture, for defence against the cold: and the soft picture, and frescoed wall and roof, covered with the last lasciviousness of Paganism; — this it understood and possessed to the full, and still possesses. This is the kind of domestic architecture on which we pride ourselves, even to this day, as an infinite and honourable advance from the rough habits of our ancestors; from the time when the king's floor was strewn with rushes, and the tapestries swayed before the searching wind in the baron's hall.

It is easy to understand how an architecture which thus appealed not less to the lowest instincts of dulness than to the subtlest pride of learning, rapidly found acceptance with a large body of mankind; and how the spacious pomp of the new manner of design came to be eagerly adopted by the luxurious aristocracies, not only of Venice, but of the other countries of Christendom, now gradually gathering themselves into that insolent and festering isolation, against which the cry of the poor sounded hourly in more ominous unison, bursting at last into thunder (mark where, — first among the painted walks and plashing fountains of the palace wherein the Renaissance luxury attained its utmost height in Europe, Versailles); that cry, mingling so much piteousness with its wrath and indignation, "Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy, and with the despitefulness of the proud."

TRAFFIC [1]

John Ruskin

My good Yorkshire friends, you asked me down here among your hills that I might talk to you about this Exchange you are going to build: but, earnestly and seriously asking you to pardon me, I am going to do nothing of the kind. I cannot talk, or at least can say very little, about this same Exchange. I must talk of quite other things, though not willingly; — I could not deserve your pardon, if, when you invited me to speak on one subject, I *wilfully* spoke on another. But I cannot speak, to purpose, of anything about which I do not care; and most simply and sorrowfully I have to tell you, in the outset, that I do *not* care about this Exchange of yours.

If, however, when you sent me your invitation, I had answered, 'I won't come, I don't care about the Exchange of Bradford,' you would have been justly offended with me, not knowing the reasons of so blunt a carelessness. So I have come down, hoping that you will patiently let me tell you why, on this, and many other such occasions, I now remain silent, when formerly I should have caught at the opportunity of speaking to a gracious audience.

In a word, then, I do not care about this Exchange, — because *you* don't; and because you know perfectly well I cannot make you. Look at the essential conditions of the case, which you, as business men, know perfectly well, though perhaps you think I forget them. You are going to spend 30,000*l*., which to

[1] *The Crown of Wild Olive*, Brantwood edition, New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1906. Lecture II. This lecture was delivered in the Town Hall, Bradford, England, April 21, 1864. It was first published in 1866.

you, collectively, is nothing; the buying a new coat is, as to the cost of it, a much more important matter of consideration, to me, than building a new Exchange is to you. But you think you may as well have the right thing for your money. You know there are a great many odd styles of architecture about; you don't want to do anything ridiculous; you hear of me, among others, as a respectable architectural man-milliner; and you send for me, that I may tell you the leading fashion; and what is, in our shops, for the moment, the newest and sweetest thing in pinnacles.

Now pardon me for telling you frankly, you cannot have good architecture merely by asking people's advice on occasion. All good architecture is the expression of national life and character; and it is produced by a prevalent and eager national taste, or desire for beauty. And I want you to think a little of the deep significance of this word 'taste'; for no statement of mine has been more earnestly or oftener controverted than that good taste is essentially a moral quality. 'No,' say many of my antagonists, 'taste is one thing, morality is another. Tell us what is pretty: we shall be glad to know that; but we need no sermons, even were you able to preach them, which may be doubted.'

Permit me, therefore, to fortify this old dogma of mine somewhat. Taste is not only a part and an index of morality; — it is the ONLY morality. The first, and last, and closest trial question to any living creature is, 'What do you like?' Tell me what you like, and I'll tell you what you are. Go out into the street, and ask the first man or woman you meet, what their 'taste' is; and if they answer candidly, you know them, body and soul. 'You, my friend in the rags, with the unsteady gait, what do *you* like?' 'A pipe, and a quartern of gin.' I know you. 'You, good woman, with the quick step and tidy bonnet, what do you like?' 'A swept hearth, and a clean tea-table; and my husband opposite me, and a baby at my breast.' Good, I know you also. 'You, little girl with the golden hair and the

soft eyes, what do you like?' 'My canary, and a run among the wood hyacinths.' 'You, little boy with the dirty hands, and the low forehead, what do you like?' 'A shy at the sparrows, and a game at pitch farthing.' Good; we know them all now. What more need we ask?

'Nay,' perhaps you answer; 'we need rather to ask what these people and children do, than what they like. If they *do* right, it is no matter that they like what is wrong; and if they *do* wrong, it is no matter that they like what is right. Doing is the great thing; and it does not matter that the man likes drinking, so that he does not drink; nor that the little girl likes to be kind to her canary, if she will not learn her lessons; nor that the little boy likes throwing stones at the sparrows, if he goes to the Sunday school.' Indeed, for a short time, and in a provisional sense, this is true. For if, resolutely, people do what is right, in time to come they like doing it. But they only are in a right moral state when they *have* come to like doing it; and as long as they don't like it, they are still in a vicious state. The man is not in health of body who is always thinking of the bottle in the cupboard, though he bravely bears his thirst; but the man who heartily enjoys water in the morning, and wine in the evening, each in its proper quantity and time. And the entire object of true education is to make people not merely *do* the right things, but *enjoy* the right things: — not merely industrious, but to love industry — not merely learned, but to love knowledge — not merely pure, but to love purity — not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice.

But you may answer or think, 'Is the liking for outside ornaments, — for pictures, or statues, or furniture, or architecture, a moral quality?' Yes, most surely, if a rightly set liking. Taste for *any* pictures or statues is not a moral quality, but taste for good ones is. Only here again we have to define the word 'good.' I don't mean by 'good' clever — or learned — or difficult in the doing. Take a picture by Teniers, of sots quarrelling

over their dice; it is an entirely clever picture; so clever that nothing in its kind has ever been done equal to it; but it is also an entirely base and evil picture. It is an expression of delight in the prolonged contemplation of a vile thing, and delight in that is an 'unmannered,' or 'immoral' quality. It is 'bad taste' in the profoundest sense — it is the taste of the devils. On the other hand, a picture of Titian's, or a Greek statue, or a Greek coin, or a Turner landscape, expresses delight in the perpetual contemplation of a good and perfect thing. That is an entirely moral quality — it is the taste of the angels. And all delight in fine art, and all love of it, resolve themselves into simple love of that which deserves love. That deserving is the quality which we call 'loveliness' — (we ought to have an opposite word, hateliness, to be said of the things which deserve to be hated); and it is not an indifferent nor optional thing whether we love this or that; but it is just the vital function of all our being. What we *like* determines what we *are*, and is the sign of what we are; and to teach taste is inevitably to form character.

As I was thinking over this, in walking up Fleet Street the other day, my eye caught the title of a book standing open in a bookseller's window. It was — 'On the necessity of the diffusion of taste among all classes.' 'Ah,' I thought to myself, 'my classifying friend, when you have diffused your taste, where will your classes be? The man who likes what you like, belongs to the same class with you, I think. Inevitably so. You may put him to other work if you choose; but, by the condition you have brought him into, he will dislike the work as much as you would yourself. You get hold of a scavenger or a costermonger, who enjoyed the Newgate Calendar for literature, and "Pop goes the Weasel" for music. You think you can make him like Dante and Beethoven? I wish you joy of your lessons; but if you do, you have made a gentleman of him: — he won't like to go back to his costermongering.'

And so completely and unexceptionally is this so, that if I

had time to-night, I could show you that a nation cannot be affected by any vice, or weakness, without expressing it, legibly, and for ever, either in bad art, or by want of art; and that there is no national virtue, small or great, which is not manifestly expressed in all the art which circumstances enable the people possessing that virtue to produce. Take, for instance, your great English virtue of enduring and patient courage. You have at present in England only one art of any consequence — that is, iron-working. You know thoroughly well how to cast and hammer iron. Now, do you think, in those masses of lava which you build volcanic cones to melt, and which you forge at the mouths of the Infernos you have created; do you think, on those iron plates, your courage and endurance are not written for ever, — not merely with an iron pen, but on iron parchment? And take also your great English vice — European vice — vice of all the world — vice of all other worlds that roll or shine in heaven, bearing with them yet the atmosphere of hell — the vice of jealousy, which brings competition into your commerce, treachery into your councils, and dishonour into your wars — that vice which has rendered for you, and for your next neighbouring nation, the daily occupations of existence no longer possible, but with the mail upon your breasts and the sword loose in its sheath; so that at last, you have realized for all the multitudes of the two great peoples who lead the so-called civilization of the earth, — you have realized for them all, I say, in person and in policy, what was once true only of the rough Border riders of your Cheviot hills —

> 'They carved at the meal
> With gloves of steel,
> And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd;' —

do you think that this national shame and dastardliness of heart are not written as legibly on every rivet of your iron armour as the strength of the right hands that forged it?

Friends, I know not whether this thing be the more ludicrous or the more melancholy. It is quite unspeakably both. Suppose, instead of being now sent for by you, I had been sent for by some private gentleman, living in a suburban house, with his garden separated only by a fruit wall from his next door neighbour's; and he had called me to consult with him on the furnishing of his drawing-room. I begin looking about me, and find the walls rather bare; I think such and such a paper might be desirable — perhaps a little fresco here and there on the ceiling — a damask curtain or so at the windows. 'Ah,' says my employer, 'damask curtains, indeed! That's all very fine, but you know I can't afford that kind of thing just now!' 'Yet the world credits you with a splendid income!' 'Ah, yes,' says my friend, 'but do you know, at present I am obliged to spend it nearly all in steel-traps?' 'Steel-traps! for whom?' 'Why, for that fellow on the other side the wall, you know: we're very good friends, capital friends; but we are obliged to keep our traps set on both sides of the wall; we could not possibly keep on friendly terms without them, and our spring guns. The worst of it is, we are both clever fellows enough; and there's never a day passes that we don't find out a new trap, or a new gun-barrel, or something; we spend about fifteen millions a year each in our traps, take it altogether; and I don't see how we're to do with less.' A highly comic state of life for two private gentlemen! but for two nations, it seems to me, not wholly comic. Bedlam would be comic, perhaps, if there were only one madman in it; and your Christmas pantomime is comic, when there is only one clown in it; but when the whole world turns clown, and paints itself red with its own heart's blood instead of vermilion, it is something else than comic, I think.

Mind, I know a great deal of this is play, and willingly allow for that. You don't know what to do with yourselves for a sensation: fox-hunting and cricketing will not carry you through the whole of this unendurably long mortal life: you liked

pop-guns when you were schoolboys, and rifles and Armstrongs are only the same things better made: but then the worst of it is, that what was play to you when boys, was not play to the sparrows; and what is play to you now, is not play to the small birds of State neither; and for the black eagles, you are somewhat shy of taking shots at them, if I mistake not.

I must get back to the matter in hand, however. Believe me, without farther instance, I could show you, in all time, that every nation's vice, or virtue, was written in its art: the soldiership of early Greece; the sensuality of late Italy; the visionary religion of Tuscany; the splendid human energy of Venice. I have no time to do this to-night (I have done it elsewhere before now); but I proceed to apply the principle to ourselves in a more searching manner.

I notice that among all the new buildings which cover your once wild hills, churches and schools are mixed in due, that is to say, in large proportion, with your mills and mansions; and I notice also that the churches and schools are almost always Gothic, and the mansions and mills are never Gothic. May I ask the meaning of this; for, remember, it is peculiarly a modern phenomenon? When Gothic was invented, houses were Gothic as well as churches; and when the Italian style superseded the Gothic, churches were Italian as well as houses. If there is a Gothic spire to the cathedral of Antwerp, there is a Gothic belfry to the Hotel de Ville at Brussels; if Inigo Jones builds an Italian Whitehall, Sir Christopher Wren builds an Italian St. Paul's. But now you live under one school of architecture, and worship under another. What do you mean by doing this? Am I to understand that you are thinking of changing your architecture back to Gothic; and that you treat your churches experimentally, because it does not matter what mistakes you make in a church? Or am I to understand that you consider Gothic a preëminently sacred and beautiful mode of building, which you think, like the fine frankincense, should

be mixed for the tabernacle only, and reserved for your religious services? For if this be the feeling, though it may seem at first as if it were graceful and reverent, at the root of the matter, it signifies neither more nor less than that you have separated your religion from your life.

For consider what a wide significance this fact has; and remember that it is not you only, but all the people of England, who are behaving thus, just now.

You have all got into the habit of calling the church 'the house of God.' I have seen, over the doors of many churches, the legend actually carved, '*This* is the house of God and this is the gate of heaven.' Now, note where that legend comes from, and of what place it was first spoken. A boy leaves his father's house to go on a long journey on foot, to visit his uncle: he has to cross a wild hill-desert; just as if one of your own boys had to cross the wolds to visit an uncle at Carlisle. The second or third day your boy finds himself somewhere between Hawes and Brough, in the midst of the moors, at sunset. It is stony ground, and boggy; he cannot go one foot farther that night. Down he lies, to sleep, on Wharnside, where best he may, gathering a few of the stones together to put under his head; — so wild the place is, he cannot get anything but stones. And there, lying under the broad night, he has a dream; and he sees a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reaches to heaven, and the angels of God are seen ascending and descending upon it. And when he wakes out of his sleep, he says, 'How dreadful is this place; surely this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' This PLACE, observe; not this church; not this city; not this stone, even, which he puts up for a memorial — the piece of flint on which his head was lain. But this *place;* this windy slope of Wharnside; this moorland hollow, torrent-bitten, snow-blighted! this *any* place where God lets down the ladder. And how are you to know where that will be? or how are you to determine where it may be, but by being

ready for it always? Do you know where the lightning is to fall next? You *do* know that, partly; you can guide the lightning; but you cannot guide the going forth of the Spirit, which is as that lightning when it shines from the east to the west.

But the perpetual and insolent warping of that strong verse to serve a merely ecclesiastical purpose, is only one of the thousand instances in which we sink back into gross Judaism. We call our churches 'temples.' Now, you know perfectly well they are *not* temples. They have never had, never can have, anything whatever to do with temples. They are 'synagogues' — 'gathering places' — where you gather yourselves together as an assembly; and by not calling them so, you again miss the force of another mighty text — 'Thou, when thou prayest, shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the *churches*' (we should translate it), 'that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father,' — which is, not in chancel nor in aisle, but 'in secret.'

Now, you feel, as I say this to you — I know you feel — as if I were trying to take away the honour of your churches. Not so; I am trying to prove to you the honour of your houses and your hills; not that the Church is not sacred — but that the whole Earth is. I would have you feel what careless, what constant, what infectious sin there is in all modes of thought, whereby, in calling your churches only 'holy,' you call your hearts and homes 'profane'; and have separated yourselves from the heathen by casting all your household gods to the ground, instead of recognizing, in the places of their many and feeble Lares, the presence of your One and Mighty Lord and Lar.

'But what has all this to with our Exchange?' you ask me, impatiently. My dear friends, it has just everything to do with it; on these inner and great questions depend all the outer and little ones; and if you have asked me down here to speak to you, because you had before been interested in anything I have

written, you must know that all I have yet said about architecture was to show this. The book I called *The Seven Lamps* was to show that certain right states of temper and moral feeling were the magic powers by which all good architecture, without exception, had been produced. *The Stones of Venice* had, from beginning to end, no other aim than to show that the Gothic architecture of Venice had arisen out of, and indicated in all its features, a state of pure national faith, and of domestic virtue; and that its Renaissance architecture had arisen out of, and in all its features indicated, a state of concealed national infidelity, and of domestic corruption. And now, you ask me what style is best to build in, and how can I answer, knowing the meaning of the two styles, but by another question — do you mean to build as Christians or as infidels? And still more — do you mean to build as honest Christians or as honest Infidels? as thoroughly and confessedly either one or the other? You don't like to be asked such rude questions. I cannot help it; they are of much more importance than this Exchange business; and if they can be at once answered, the Exchange business settles itself in a moment. But before I press them farther, I must ask leave to explain one point clearly.

In all my past work, my endeavour has been to show that good architecture is essentially religious — the production of a faithful and virtuous, not of an infidel and corrupted people. But in the course of doing this, I have had also to show that good architecture is not *ecclesiastical*. People are so apt to look upon religion as the business of the clergy, not their own, that the moment they hear of anything depending on 'religion,' they think it must also have depended on the priesthood; and I have had to take what place was to be occupied between these two errors, and fight both, often with seeming contradiction. Good architecture is the work of good and believing men; therefore, you say, at least some people say, 'Good architecture must essentially have been the work of the clergy, not of the laity.'

No — a thousand times no; good architecture [1] has always been the work of the commonalty, *not* of the clergy. What, you say, those glorious cathedrals — the pride of Europe — did their builders not form Gothic architecture? No; they corrupted Gothic architecture. Gothic was formed in the baron's castle, and the burgher's street. It was formed by the thoughts, and hands, and powers of labouring citizens and warrior kings. By the monk it was used as an instrument for the aid of his superstition: when that superstition became a beautiful madness, and the best hearts of Europe vainly dreamed and pined in the cloister, and vainly raged and perished in the crusade, — through that fury of perverted faith and wasted war, the Gothic rose also to its loveliest, most fantastic, and finally, most foolish dreams; and in those dreams, was lost.

I hope, now, that there is no risk of your misunderstanding me when I come to the gist of what I want to say to-night; — when I repeat, that every great national architecture has been the result and exponent of a great national religion. You can't have bits of it here, bits there — you must have it everywhere or nowhere. It is not the monopoly of a clerical company — it is not the exponent of a theological dogma — it is not the hieroglyphic writing of an initiated priesthood; it is the manly language of a people inspired by resolute and common purpose, and rendering resolute and common fidelity to the legible laws of an undoubted God.

Now there have as yet been three distinct schools of European architecture. I say, European, because Asiatic and African architectures belong so entirely to other races and climates, that there is no question of them here; only, in passing, I will simply assure you that whatever is good or great in Egypt, and Syria, and India, is just good or great for the same reasons as the buildings on our side of the Bosphorus. We Europeans, then,

[1] [And all other arts, for the most part; even of incredulous and secularly-minded commonalties.]

have had three great religions: the Greek, which was the worship of the God of Wisdom and Power; the Mediæval, which was the worship of the God of Judgment and Consolation; the Renaissance, which was the worship of the God of Pride and Beauty: these three we have had — they are past, — and now, at last, we English have got a fourth religion, and a God of our own, about which I want to ask you. But I must explain these three old ones first.

I repeat, first, the Greeks essentially worshipped the God of Wisdom; so that whatever contended against their religion, — to the Jews a stumbling-block, — was, to the Greeks — *Foolishness*.

The first Greek idea of deity was that expressed in the word, of which we keep the remnant in our words 'Di-urnal' and 'Divine' — the god of *Day*, Jupiter the revealer. Athena is his daughter, but especially daughter of the Intellect, springing armed from the head. We are only with the help of recent investigation beginning to penetrate the depth of meaning couched under the Athenaic symbols: but I may note rapidly, that her ægis, the mantle with the serpent fringes, in which she often, in the best statues, is represented as folding up her left hand, for better guard; and the Gorgon, on her shield, are both representative mainly of the chilling horror and sadness (turning men to stone, as it were), of the outmost and superficial spheres of knowledge — that knowledge which separates, in bitterness, hardness, and sorrow, the heart of the full grown man from the heart of the child. For out of imperfect knowledge spring terror, dissension, danger, and disdain; but from perfect knowledge, given by the full-revealed Athena, strength and peace, in sign of which she is crowned with the olive spray, and bears the resistless spear.

This, then, was the Greek conception of purest Deity; and every habit of life, and every form of his art developed themselves from the seeking this bright, serene, resistless wisdom;

and setting himself, as a man, to do things evermore rightly and strongly;[1] not with any ardent affection or ultimate hope; but with a resolute and continent energy of will, as knowing that for failure there was no consolation, and for sin there was no remission. And the Greek architecture rose unerring, bright, clearly defined, and self-contained.

Next followed in Europe the great Christian faith, which was essentially the religion of Comfort. Its great doctrine is the remission of sins; for which cause, it happens, too often, in certain phases of Christianity, that sin and sickness themselves are partly glorified, as if, the more you had to be healed of, the more divine was the healing. The practical result of this doctrine, in art, is a continual contemplation of sin and disease, and of imaginary states of purification from them; thus we have an architecture conceived in a mingled sentiment of melancholy and aspiration, partly severe, partly luxuriant, which will bend itself to every one of our needs, and every one of our fancies, and be strong or weak with us, as we are strong or weak ourselves. It is, of all architecture, the basest, when base people build it — of all, the noblest, when built by the noble.

And now note that both these religions — Greek and Mediæval — perished by falsehood in their own main purpose. The Greek religion of Wisdom perished in a false philosophy — 'Oppositions of science, falsely so called.' The Mediæval religion of Consolation perished in false comfort; in remission of sins given lyingly. It was the selling of absolution that ended the Mediæval faith; and I can tell you more, it is the selling of

[1] [It is an error to suppose that the Greek worship, or seeking, was chiefly of Beauty. It was essentially of rightness and strength, founded on Forethought: the principal character of Greek art is not beauty, but design: and the Dorian Apollo-worship and Athenian Virgin-worship are both expressions of adoration of divine wisdom and purity. Next to these great deities, rank, in power over the national mind, Dionysus and Ceres, the givers of human strength and life; then, for heroic examples, Hercules. There is no Venus-worship among the Greeks in the great times: and the Muses are essentially teachers of Truth, and of its harmonies. Compare *Aratra Pentelici*.]

absolution which, to the end of time, will mark false Christianity. Pure Christianity gives her remission of sins only by *ending* them; but false Christianity gets her remission of sins by *compounding for* them. And there are many ways of compounding for them. We English have beautiful little quiet ways of buying absolution, whether in low Church or high, far more cunning than any of Tetzel's trading.

Then, thirdly, there followed the religion of Pleasure, in which all Europe gave itself to luxury, ending in death. First, *bals masqués* in every saloon, and then guillotines in every square. And all these three worships issue in vast temple building. Your Greek worshipped Wisdom, and built you the Parthenon — the Virgin's temple. The Mediæval worshipped Consolation, and built you Virgin temples also — but to our Lady of Salvation. Then the Revivalist worshipped beauty, of a sort, and built you Versailles and the Vatican. Now, lastly, will you tell me what *we* worship, and what *we* build?

You know we are speaking always of the real, active, continual, national worship; that by which men act, while they live; not that which they talk of, when they die. Now, we have, indeed, a nominal religion, to which we pay tithes of property and sevenths of time; but we have also a practical and earnest religion, to which we devote nine-tenths of our property, and six-sevenths of our time. And we dispute a great deal about the nominal religion: but we are all unanimous about this practical one; of which I think you will admit that the ruling goddess may be best generally described as the 'Goddess of Getting-on,' or 'Britannia of the Market.' The Athenians had an 'Athena Agoraia,' or Athena of the Market; but she was a subordinate type of their goddess, while our Britannia Agoraia is the principal type of ours. And all your great architectural works are, of course, built to her. It is long since you built a great cathedral; and how you would laugh at me if I proposed building a cathedral on the top of one of these hills of

yours, to make it an Acropolis! But your railroad mounds, vaster than the walls of Babylon; your railroad stations, vaster than the temple of Ephesus, and innumerable; your chimneys, how much more mighty and costly than cathedral spires! your harbour piers; your warehouses; your exchanges! — all these are built to your great Goddess of 'Getting-on;' and she has formed, and will continue to form, your architecture, as long as you worship her; and it is quite vain to ask me to tell you how to build to *her;* you know far better than I.

There might, indeed, on some theories, be a conceivably good architecture for Exchanges — that is to say, if there were any heroism in the fact or deed of exchange, which might be typically carved on the outside of your building. For, you know, all beautiful architecture must be adorned with sculpture or painting; and for sculpture or painting, you must have a subject. And hitherto it has been a received opinion among the nations of the world that the only right subjects for either, were *heroisms* of some sort. Even on his pots and his flagons, the Greek put a Hercules slaying lions, or an Apollo slaying serpents, or Bacchus slaying melancholy giants, and earth-born despondencies. On his temples, the Greek put contests of great warriors in founding states, or of gods with evil spirits. On his houses and temples alike, the Christian put carvings of angels conquering devils; or of hero-martyrs exchanging this world for another: subject inappropriate, I think, to our direction of exchange here. And the Master of Christians not only left His followers without any orders as to the sculpture of affairs of exchange on the outside of buildings, but gave some strong evidence of His dislike of affairs of exchange within them. And yet there might surely be a heroism in such affairs; and all commerce become a kind of selling of doves, not impious. The wonder has always been great to me, that heroism has never been supposed to be in anywise consistent with the practice of supplying people with food, or clothes; but rather with that of

quartering one's self upon them for food, and stripping them of their clothes. Spoiling of armour is an heroic deed in all ages; but the selling of clothes, old, or new, has never taken any colour of magnanimity. Yet one does not see why feeding the hungry and clothing the naked should ever become base businesses, even when engaged in on a large scale. If one could contrive to attach the notion of conquest to them anyhow! so that, supposing there were anywhere an obstinate race, who refused to be comforted, one might take some pride in giving them compulsory comfort![1] and, as it were, '*occupying* a country' with one's gifts, instead of one's armies? If one could only consider it as much a victory to get a barren field sown, as to get an eared field stripped; and contend who should build villages, instead of who should 'carry' them! Are not all forms of heroism conceivable in doing these serviceable deeds? You doubt who is strongest? It might be ascertained by push of spade, as well as push of sword. Who is wisest? There are witty things to be thought of in planning other business than campaigns. Who is bravest? There are always the elements to fight with, stronger than men; and nearly as merciless.

The only absolutely and unapproachably heroic element in the soldier's work seems to be — that he is paid little for it — and regularly: while you traffickers, and exchangers, and others occupied in presumably benevolent business, like to be paid much for it — and by chance. I never can make out how it is that a *knight*-errant does not expect to be paid for his trouble, but a *pedlar*-errant always does; — that people are willing to take hard knocks for nothing, but never to sell ribands cheap; that they are ready to go on fervent crusades, to recover the tomb of a buried God, but never on any travels to fulfil the orders of a living one; — that they will go anywhere barefoot to preach their faith, but must be well bribed to practise it, and are per-

[1] [Quite serious, all this, though it reads like jest.]

fectly ready to give the Gospel gratis, but never the loaves and fishes.[1]

If you chose to take the matter up on any such soldierly principle; to do your commerce, and your feeding of nations, for fixed salaries; and to be as particular about giving people the best food, and the best cloth, as soldiers are about giving them the best gunpowder, I could carve something for you on your exchange worth looking at. But I can only at present suggest decorating its frieze with pendant purses; and making its pillars broad at the base, for the sticking of bills. And in the innermost chambers of it there might be a statue of Britannia of the Market, who may have, perhaps advisably, a partridge for her crest, typical at once of her courage in fighting for noble ideas, and of her interest in game; and round its neck, the inscription in golden letters, 'Perdix fovit quæ non peperit.'[2] Then, for her spear, she might have a weaver's beam; and on her shield, instead of St. George's Cross, the Milanese boar, semi-fleeced, with the town of Gennesaret proper, in the field; and the legend, 'In the best market,'[3] and her corslet, of leather folded over her heart in the shape of a purse, with thirty slits in it, for a piece of money to go in at, on each day of the month. And I doubt not but that people would come to see your exchange, and its goddess, with applause.

Nevertheless, I want to point out to you certain strange characters in this goddess of yours. She differs from the great Greek and Mediæval deities essentially in two things — first, as to the continuance of her presumed power; secondly, as to the extent of it.

1st, as to the Continuance.

The Greek Goddess of Wisdom gave continual increase of

[1] [Please think over this paragraph, too briefly and antithetically put, but one of those which I am happiest in having written.]

[2] Jerem. XVII, II, (best in Septuagint and Vulgate). 'As the partridge, fostering what she brought not forth, so he that getteth riches, not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.'

[3] [Meaning, fully, 'We have brought our pigs to it.']

wisdom, as the Christian Spirit of Comfort (or Comforter) continual increase of comfort. There was no question, with these, of any limit or cessation of function. But with your Agora Goddess, that is just the most important question. Getting on — but where to? Gathering together — but how much? Do you mean to gather always — never to spend? If so, I wish you joy of your goddess, for I am just as well off as you, without the trouble of worshipping her at all. But if you do not spend, somebody else will — somebody else must. And it is because of this (among many other such errors) that I have fearlessly declared your so-called science of Political Economy to be no science; because, namely, it has omitted the study of exactly the most important branch of the business — the study of *spending*. For spend you must, and as much as you make, ultimately. You gather corn: — will you bury England under a heap of grain; or will you, when you have gathered, finally eat? You gather gold: — will you make your house-roofs of it, or pave your streets with it? That is still one way of spending it. But if you keep it, that you may get more, I'll give you more; I'll give you all the gold you want — all you can imagine — if you can tell me what you'll do with it. You shall have thousands of gold pieces; — thousands of thousands — millions — mountains of gold: where will you keep them? Will you put an Olympus of silver upon a golden Pelion — make Ossa like a wart? Do you think the rain and dew would then come down to you, in the streams from such mountains, more blessedly than they will down the mountains which God has made for you, of moss and whinstone? But it is not gold that you want to gather! What is it? greenbacks? No; not those neither. What is it then — is it ciphers after a capital I? Cannot you practise writing ciphers, and write as many as you want! Write ciphers for an hour every morning, in a big book, and say every evening, I am worth all those noughts more than I was yesterday. Won't that do? Well, what in the name of Plutus is it you

want? Not gold, not greenbacks, not ciphers after a capital I? You will have to answer, after all, 'No; we want, somehow or other, money's *worth*.' Well, what is that? Let your Goddess of Getting-on discover it, and let her learn to stay therein.

2d. But there is yet another question to be asked respecting this Goddess of Getting-on. The first was of the continuance of her power; the second is of its extent.

Pallas and the Madonna were supposed to be all the world's Pallas, and all the world's Madonna. They could teach all men, and they could comfort all men. But, look strictly into the nature of the power of your Goddess of Getting-on; and you will find she is the Goddess — not of everybody's getting on — but only of somebody's getting on. This is a vital, or rather deathful, distinction. Examine it in your own ideal of the state of national life which this Goddess is to evoke and maintain. I asked you what it was, when I was last here;[1] — you have never told me. Now, shall I try to tell you?

Your ideal of human life then is, I think, that it should be passed in a pleasant undulating world, with iron and coal everywhere underneath it. On each pleasant bank of this world is to be a beautiful mansion, with two wings; and stables, and coach-houses; a moderately-sized park; a large garden and hot-houses; and pleasant carriage drives through the shrubberies. In this mansion are to live the favoured votaries of the Goddess; the English gentleman, with his gracious wife, and his beautiful family; he always able to have the boudoir and the jewels for the wife, and the beautiful ball dresses for the daughters, and hunters for the sons, and a shooting in the Highlands for himself. At the bottom of the bank, is to be the mill; not less than a quarter of a mile long, with one steam engine at each end, and two in the middle, and a chimney three hundred feet high. In this mill are to be in constant employment from eight hundred to a thousand workers, who never

[1] *The Two Paths.*

drink, never strike, always go to church on Sunday, and always express themselves in respectful language.

Is not that, broadly, and in the main features, the kind of thing you propose to yourselves? It is very pretty indeed, seen from above; not at all so pretty, seen from below. For, observe, while to one family this deity is indeed the Goddess of Getting-on, to a thousand families she is the Goddess of *not* Getting-on. 'Nay,' you say, 'they have all their chance.' Yes, so has every one in a lottery, but there must always be the same number of blanks. 'Ah! but in a lottery it is not skill and intelligence which take the lead, but blind chance.' What then! do you think the old practice, that 'they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can,' is less iniquitous, when the power has become power of brains instead of fist? and that, though we may not take advantage of a child's or a woman's weakness, we may of a man's foolishness? 'Nay, but finally, work must be done, and some one must be at the top, some one at the bottom.' Granted, my friends. Work must always be, and captains of work must always be; and if you in the least remember the tone of any of my writings, you must know that they are thought unfit for this age, because they are always insisting on need of government, and speaking with scorn of liberty. But I beg you to observe that there is a wide difference between being captains or governors of work, and taking the profits of it. It does not follow, because you are general of an army, that you are to take all the treasure, or land, it wins; (if it fight for treasure or land;) neither, because you are king of a nation, that you are to consume all the profits of the nation's work. Real kings, on the contrary, are known invariably by their doing quite the reverse of this, — by their taking the least possible quantity of the nation's work for themselves. There is no test of real kinghood so infallible as that. Does the crowned creature live simply, bravely, unostentatiously? probably he *is* a King. Does he cover his body with

jewels, and his table with delicates? in all probability he is *not* a King. It is possible he may be, as Solomon was; but that is when the nation shares his splendour with him. Solomon made gold, not only to be in his own palace as stones, but to be in Jerusalem as stones. But, even so, for the most part, these splendid kinghoods expire in ruin, and only the true kinghoods live, which are of royal labourers governing loyal labourers; who, both leading rough lives, establish the true dynasties. Conclusively you will find that because you are king of a nation, it does not follow that you are to gather for yourself all the wealth of that nation; neither, because you are king of a small part of the nation, and lord over the means of its maintenance — over field, or mill, or mine, — are you to take all the produce of that piece of the foundation of national existence for yourself.

You will tell me I need not preach against these things, for I cannot mend them. No, good friends, I cannot; but you can, and you will; or something else can and will. Even good things have no abiding power — and shall these evil things persist in victorious evil? All history shows, on the contrary, that to be the exact thing they never can do. Change *must* come; but it is ours to determine whether change of growth, or change of death. Shall the Parthenon be in ruins on its rock, and Bolton priory in its meadow, but these mills of yours be the consummation of the buildings of the earth, and their wheels be as the wheels of eternity? Think you that 'men may come, and men may go,' but — mills — go on for ever? Not so; out of these, better or worse shall come; and it is for you to choose which.

I know that none of this wrong is done with deliberate purpose. I know, on the contrary, that you wish your workmen well; that you do much for them, and that you desire to do more for them, if you saw your way to such benevolence safely. I know that even all this wrong and misery are brought about by a warped sense of duty, each of you striving to do his best;

but, unhappily, not knowing for whom this best should be done. And all our hearts have been betrayed by the plausible impiety of the modern economist, telling us that, 'To do the best for ourselves, is finally to do the best for others.' Friends, our great Master said not so; and most absolutely we shall find this world is not made so. Indeed, to do the best for others, is finally to do the best for ourselves; but it will not do to have our eyes fixed on that issue. The Pagans had got beyond that. Hear what a Pagan says of this matter; hear what were, perhaps, the last written words of Plato, — if not the last actually written (for this we cannot know), yet assuredly in fact and power his parting words — in which, endeavouring to give full crowning and harmonious close to all his thoughts, and speak the sum of them by the imagined sentence of the Great Spirit, his strength and his heart fail him, and the words cease, broken off forever.

They are at the close of the dialogue called 'Critias,' in which he describes, partly from real tradition, partly in ideal dream, the early state of Athens; and the genesis, and order, and religion, of the fabled isle of Atlantis; in which genesis he conceives the same first perfection and final degeneracy of man, which in our own Scriptural tradition is expressed by saying that the Sons of God inter-married with the daughters of men, for he supposes the earliest race to have been indeed the children of God; and to have corrupted themselves, until 'their spot was not the spot of his children.' And this, he says, was the end; that indeed 'through many generations, so long as the God's nature in them yet was full, they were submissive to the sacred laws, and carried themselves lovingly to all that had kindred with them in divineness; for their uttermost spirit was faithful and true, and in every wise great; so that, in *all meekness of wisdom, they dealt with each other*, and took all the chances of life; and despising all things except virtue, they cared little what happened day by day, and *bore lightly the burden of gold* and of

possessions; for they saw that, if *only their common love and virtue increased, all these things would be increased together with them;* but to set their esteem and ardent pursuit upon material possession would be to lose that first, and their virtue and affection together with it. And by such reasoning, and what of the divine nature remained in them, they gained all this greatness of which we have already told; but when the God's part of them faded and became extinct, being mixed again and again, and effaced by the prevalent mortality; and the human nature at last exceeded, they then became unable to endure the courses of fortune; and fell into shapelessness of life, and baseness in the sight of him who could see, having lost everything that was fairest of their honour; while to the blind hearts which could not discern the true life, tending to happiness, it seemed that they were then chiefly noble and happy, being filled with all iniquity of inordinate possession and power. Whereupon, the God of Gods, whose Kinghood is in laws, beholding a once just nation thus cast into misery, and desiring to lay such punishment upon them as might make them repent into restraining, gathered together all the gods into his dwelling place, which from heaven's centre overlooks whatever has part in creation; and having assembled them, he said' ——

The rest is silence. Last words of the chief wisdom of the heathen, spoken of this idol of riches; this idol of yours; this golden image, high by measureless cubits, set up where your green fields of England are furnace-burnt into likeness of the plain of Dura: this idol, forbidden to us, first of all idols, by our own Master and faith; forbidden to us also by every human lip that has ever, in any age or people, been accounted of as able to speak according to the purposes of God. Continue to make that forbidden deity your principal one, and soon no more art, no more science, no more pleasure will be possible. Catastrophe will come; or, worse than catastrophe, slow mouldering and withering into Hades. But if you can fix some

conception of a true human state of life to be striven for — life, good for all men, as for yourselves; if you can determine some honest and simple order of existence; following those trodden ways of wisdom, which are pleasantness, and seeking her quiet and withdrawn paths, which are peace;[1] — then, and so sanctifying wealth into 'commonwealth,' all your art, your literature, your daily labours, your domestic affection, and citizen's duty, will join and increase into one magnificent harmony. You will know then how to build, well enough; you will build with stone well, but with flesh better; temples not made with hands, but riveted of hearts; and that kind of marble, crimson-veined, is indeed eternal.

[1] [I imagine the Hebrew chant merely intends passionate repetition, and not a distinction of this somewhat fanciful kind; yet we may profitably make it in reading the English.]

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE AND ITS ARTS[1]

JOHN RUSKIN

WHEN I accepted the privilege of addressing you to-day, I was not aware of a restriction with respect to the topics of discussion which may be brought before this Society[2] — a restriction which, though entirely wise and right under the circumstances contemplated in its introduction, would necessarily have disabled me, thinking as I think, from preparing any lecture for you on the subject of art in a form which might be permanently useful. Pardon me, therefore, in so far as I must transgress such limitation; for indeed my infringement will be of the letter — not of the spirit — of your commands. In whatever I may say touching the religion which has been the foundation of art, or the policy which has contributed to its power, if I offend one, I shall offend all; for I shall take no note of any separations in creeds, or antagonisms in parties: neither do I fear that ultimately I shall offend any, by proving — or at least stating as capable of positive proof — the connection of all that is best in the crafts and arts of man, with the simplicity of his faith, and the sincerity of his patriotism.

But I speak to you under another disadvantage, by which I am checked in frankness of utterance, not here only, but everywhere; namely, that I am never fully aware how far my audiences are disposed to give me credit for real knowledge of my subject, or how far they grant me attention only because I have been sometimes thought an ingenious or pleasant essayist upon

[1] From *Sesame and Lilies*, London: Smith, Elder and Company, 1871. This lecture was delivered at the Royal College of Science, Dublin, May 13, 1868.

[2] That no reference should be made to religious questions.

it. For I have had what, in many respects, I boldly call the misfortune, to set my words sometimes prettily together; not without a foolish vanity in the poor knack that I had of doing so; until I was heavily punished for this pride, by finding that many people thought of the words only, and cared nothing for their meaning. Happily, therefore, the power of using such pleasant language — if indeed it ever were mine — is passing away from me; and whatever I am now able to say at all, I find myself forced to say with great plainness. For my thoughts have changed also, as my words have; and whereas in earlier life, what little influence I obtained was due perhaps chiefly to the enthusiasm with which I was able to dwell on the beauty of the physical clouds, and of their colours in the sky; so all the influence I now desire to retain must be due to the earnestness with which I am endeavouring to trace the form and beauty of another kind of cloud than those; the bright cloud, of which it is written —

"What is your life? It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

I suppose few people reach the middle or latter period of their age, without having, at some moment of change or disappointment, felt the truth of those bitter words; and been startled by the fading of the sunshine from the cloud of their life, into the sudden agony of the knowledge that the fabric of it was as fragile as a dream, and the endurance of it as transient as the dew. But it is not always that, even at such times of melancholy surprise, we can enter into any true perception that this human life shares, in the nature of it, not only the evanescence, but the mystery of the cloud; that its avenues are wreathed in darkness, and its forms and courses no less fantastic, than spectral and obscure; so that not only in the vanity which we cannot grasp, but in the shadow which we cannot pierce, it is true of this cloudy life of ours, that "man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain."

And least of all, whatever may have been the eagerness of our passions, or the height of our pride, are we able to understand in its depth the third and most solemn character in which our life is like those clouds of heaven; that to it belongs not only their transience, not only their mystery, but also their power; that in the cloud of the human soul there is a fire stronger than the lightning, and a grace more precious than the rain; and that though of the good and evil it shall one day be said alike, that the place that knew them knows them no more, there is an infinite separation between those whose brief presence had there been a blessing, like the mist of Eden that went up from the earth to water the garden, and those whose place knew them only as a drifting and changeful shade, of whom the heavenly sentence is, that they are "wells without water; clouds that are carried with a tempest, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever"?

To those among us, however, who have lived long enough to form some just estimate of the rate of the changes which are, hour by hour in accelerating catastrophe, manifesting themselves in the laws, the arts, and the creeds of men, it seems to me, that now at least, if never at any former time, the thoughts of the true nature of our life, and of its powers and responsibilities, should present themselves with absolute sadness and sternness. And although I know that this feeling is much deepened in my own mind by disappointment, which, by chance, has attended the greater number of my cherished purposes, I do not for that reason distrust the feeling itself, though I am on my guard against an exaggerated degree of it: nay, I rather believe that in periods of new effort and violent change, disappointment is a wholesome medicine; and that in the secret of it, as in the twilight so beloved by Titian, we may see the colours of things with deeper truth than in the most dazzling sunshine. And because these truths about the works of men, which I want to bring to-day before you, are most of them sad ones,

though at the same time helpful; and because also I believe that your kind Irish hearts will answer more gladly to the truthful expression of a personal feeling, than to the exposition of an abstract principle, I will permit myself so much unreserved speaking of my own causes of regret, as may enable you to make just allowance for what, according to your sympathies, you will call either the bitterness, or the insight, of a mind which has surrendered its best hopes, and been foiled in its favourite aims.

I spent the ten strongest years of my life, (from twenty to thirty,) in endeavouring to show the excellence of the work of the man whom I believed, and rightly believed, to be the greatest painter of the schools of England since Reynolds. I had then perfect faith in the power of every great truth or beauty to prevail ultimately, and take its right place in usefulness and honour; and I strove to bring the painter's work into this due place, while the painter was yet alive. But he knew, better than I, the uselessness of talking about what people could not see for themselves. He always discouraged me scornfully, even when he thanked me — and he died before even the superficial effect of my work was visible. I went on, however, thinking I could at least be of use to the public, if not to him, in proving his power. My books got talked about a little. The prices of modern pictures, generally, rose, and I was beginning to take some pleasure in a sense of gradual victory, when, fortunately or unfortunately, an opportunity of perfect trial undeceived me at once, and for ever. The Trustees of the National Gallery commissioned me to arrange the Turner drawings there, and permitted me to prepare three hundred examples of his studies from nature, for exhibition at Kensington. At Kensington they were and are placed for exhibition; but they are not exhibited, for the room in which they hang is always empty.

Well — this showed me at once, that those ten years of my life had been, in their chief purpose, lost. For that, I did not much care; I had, at least, learned my own business thoroughly, and

should be able, as I fondly supposed, after such a lesson, now to use my knowledge with better effect. But what I did care for, was the — to me frightful — discovery, that the most splendid genius in the arts might be permitted by Providence to labour and perish uselessly; that in the very fineness of it there might be something rendering it invisible to ordinary eyes; but, that with this strange excellence, faults might be mingled which would be as deadly as its virtues were vain; that the glory of it was perishable, as well as invisible, and the gift and grace of it might be to us, as snow in summer, as rain in harvest.

That was the first mystery of life to me. But, while my best energy was given to the study of painting, I had put collateral effort, more prudent, if less enthusiastic, into that of architecture; and in this I could not complain of meeting with no sympathy. Among several personal reasons which caused me to desire that I might give this, my closing lecture on the subject of art here, in Ireland, one of the chief was, that in reading it, I should stand near the beautiful building, — the engineers' school of your college, — which was the first realization I had the joy to see, of the principles I had, until then, been endeavouring to teach; but which alas, is now, to me, no more than the richly canopied monument of one of the most earnest souls that ever gave itself to the art, and one of my truest and most loving friends, Benjamin Woodward. Nor was it here in Ireland only that I received the help of Irish sympathy and genius. When, to another friend, Sir Thomas Deane, with Mr. Woodward, was entrusted the building of the museum at Oxford, the best details of the work were executed by sculptors who had been born and trained here; and the first window of the façade of the building, in which was inaugurated the study of natural science in England, in true fellowship with literature, was carved from my design by an Irish sculptor.

You may perhaps think that no man ought to speak of disappointment, to whom, even in one branch of labour, so much

success was granted. Had Mr. Woodward now been beside me, I had not so spoken; but his gentle and passionate spirit was cut off from the fulfilment of its purposes, and the work we did together is now become vain. It may not be so in future; but the architecture we endeavoured to introduce is inconsistent alike with the reckless luxury, the deforming mechanism, and the squalid misery of modern cities; among the formative fashions of the day, aided, especially in England, by ecclesiastical sentiment, it indeed obtained notoriety; and sometimes behind an engine furnace, or a railroad bank, you may detect the pathetic discord of its momentary grace, and, with toil, decipher its floral carvings choked with soot. I felt answerable to the schools I loved, only for their injury. I perceived that this new portion of my strength had also been spent in vain; and from amidst streets of iron, and palaces of crystal, shrank back at last to the carving of the mountain and colour of the flower.

And still I could tell of failure, and failure repeated, as years went on; but I have trespassed enough on your patience to show you, in part, the causes of my discouragement. Now let me more deliberately tell you its results. You know there is a tendency in the minds of many men, when they are heavily disappointed in the main purposes of their life, to feel, and perhaps in warning, perhaps in mockery, to declare, that life itself is a vanity. Because it has disappointed them, they think its nature is of disappointment always, or at best, of pleasure that can be grasped by imagination only; that the cloud of it has no strength nor fire within; but is a painted cloud only, to be delighted in, yet despised. You know how beautifully Pope has expressed this particular phase of thought: —

> "Meanwhile opinion gilds, with varying rays,
> These painted clouds that beautify our days;
> Each want of happiness by hope supplied,
> And each vacuity of sense, by pride.

> Hope builds as fast as Knowledge can destroy;
> In Folly's cup, still laughs the bubble joy.
> One pleasure past, another still we gain,
> And not a vanity is given in vain."

But the effect of failure upon my own mind has been just the reverse of this. The more that my life disappointed me, the more solemn and wonderful it became to me. It seemed, contrarily to Pope's saying, that the vanity of it *was* indeed given in vain; but that there was something behind the veil of it, which was not vanity. It became to me not a painted cloud, but a terrible and impenetrable one: not a mirage, which vanished as I drew near, but a pillar of darkness, to which I was forbidden to draw near. For I saw that both my own failure, and such success in petty things as in its poor triumph seemed to me worse than failure, came from the want of sufficiently earnest effort to understand the whole law and meaning of existence, and to bring it to noble and due end; as, on the other hand, I saw more and more clearly that all enduring success in the arts, or in any other occupation, had come from the ruling of lower purposes, not by conviction of their nothingness, but by a solemn faith in the advancing power of human nature, or in the promise, however dimly apprehended, that the mortal part of it would one day be swallowed up in immortality; and that, indeed, the arts themselves never had reached any vital strength or honour but in the effort to proclaim this immortality, and in the service either of great and just religion, or of some unselfish patriotism, and law of such national life as must be the foundation of religion.

Nothing that I have ever said is more true or necessary — nothing has been more misunderstood or misapplied — than my strong assertion, that the arts can never be right themselves, unless their motive is right. It is misunderstood this way: weak painters, who have never learned their business, and cannot lay a true line, continually come to me, crying out — "Look

at this picture of mine; it *must* be good, I had such a lovely motive. I have put my whole heart into it, and taken years to think over its treatment." Well, the only answer for these people is — if one had the cruelty to make it — "Sir, you cannot think over *any*thing in any number of years, — you haven't the head to do it; and though you had fine motives, strong enough to make you burn yourself in a slow fire, if only first you could paint a picture, you can't paint one, nor half an inch of one; you haven't the hand to do it."

But, far more decisively we have to say to the men who *do* know their business, or may know it if they choose — "Sir, you have this gift, and a mighty one; see that you serve your nation faithfully with it. It is a greater trust than ships and armies: you might cast *them* away, if you were their captain, with less treason to your people than in casting your own glorious power away, and serving the devil with it instead of men. Ships and armies you may replace if they are lost, but a great intellect, once abused is a curse to the earth for ever."

This, then, I meant by saying that the arts must have noble motive. This also I said respecting them, that they never had prospered, nor could prosper, but when they had such true purpose, and were devoted to the proclamation of divine truth or law. And yet I saw also that they had always failed in this proclamation — that poetry, and sculpture, and painting, though only great when they strove to teach us something about the gods, never had taught us anything trustworthy about the gods, but had always betrayed their trust in the crisis of it, and with their powers at the full reach, became ministers to pride and to lust. And I felt also, with increasing amazement, the unconquerable apathy in ourselves the hearers, no less than in these the teachers; and that, while the wisdom and rightness of every act and art of life could only be consistent with a right understanding of the ends of life, we were all plunged as in a languid dream — our heart fat, and our eyes heavy, and our

ears closed, lest the inspiration of hand or voice should reach us — lest we should see with our eyes, and understand with our hearts, and be healed.

This intense apathy in all of us is the first great mystery of life; it stands in the way of every perception, every virtue. There is no making ourselves feel enough astonishment at it. That the occupations or pastimes of life should have no motive, is understandable; but — That life itself should have no motive — that we neither care to find out what it may lead to, nor to guard against its being for ever taken away from us — here is a mystery indeed. For, just suppose I were able to call at this moment to any one in this audience by name, and to tell him positively that I knew a large estate had been lately left to him on some curious conditions; but that, though I knew it was large, I did not know how large, nor even where it was — whether in the East Indies or the West, or in England, or at the Antipodes. I only knew it was a vast estate, and that there was a chance of his losing it altogether if he did not soon find out on what terms it had been left to him. Suppose I were able to say this positively to any single man in this audience, and he knew that I did not speak without warrant, do you think that he would rest content with that vague knowledge, if it were anywise possible to obtain more? Would he not give every energy to find some trace of the facts, and never rest till he had ascertained where this place was, and what it was like? And suppose he were a young man, and all he could discover by his best endeavour was, that the estate was never to be his at all, unless he persevered, during certain years of probation, in an orderly and industrious life; but that, according to the rightness of his conduct, the portion of the estate assigned to him would be greater or less, so that it literally depended on his behaviour from day to day whether he got ten thousand a year, or thirty thousand a year, or nothing whatever — would you not think it strange if the youth never troubled himself to satisfy the

conditions in any way, nor even to know what was required of him, but lived exactly as he chose, and never inquired whether his chances of the estate were increasing or passing away? Well, you know that this is actually and literally so with the greater number of the educated persons now living in Christian countries. Nearly every man and woman, in any company such as this, outwardly professes to believe — and a large number unquestionably think they believe — much more than this; not only that a quite unlimited estate is in prospect for them if they please the Holder of it, but that the infinite contrary of such a possession — an estate of perpetual misery, is in store for them if they displease this great Land-Holder, this great Heaven-Holder. And yet there is not one in a thousand of these human souls that cares to think, for ten minutes of the day, where this estate is, or how beautiful it is, or what kind of life they are to lead in it, or what kind of life they must lead to obtain it.

You fancy that you care to know this: so little do you care that, probably, at this moment many of you are displeased with me for talking of the matter! You came to hear about the Art of this world, not about the Life of the next, and you are provoked with me for talking of what you can hear any Sunday in church. But do not be afraid. I will tell you something before you go about pictures, and carvings, and pottery, and what else you would like better to hear of than the other world. Nay, perhaps you say, "We want you to talk of pictures and pottery, because we are sure that you know something of them, and you know nothing of the other world." Well — I don't. That is quite true. But the very strangeness and mystery of which I urge you to take notice is in this — that I do not; — nor you either. Can you answer a single bold question unflinchingly about the other world — Are you sure there is a heaven? Sure there is a hell? Sure that men are dropping before your faces through the pavements of these streets into eternal fire, or sure that they are not? Sure that at your own death you are going

to be delivered from all sorrow, to be endowed with all virtue, to be gifted with all felicity, and raised into perpetual companionship with a King, compared to whom the kings of the earth are as grasshoppers, and the nations as the dust of His feet? Are you sure of this? or, if not sure, do any of us so much as care to make it sure? and, if not, how can anything that we do be right — how can anything we think be wise; what honour can there be in the arts that amuse us, or what profit in the possessions that please?

Is not this a mystery of life?

But farther, you may, perhaps, think it a beneficent ordinance for the generality of men that they do not, with earnestness or anxiety, dwell on such questions of the future; because the business of the day could not be done if this kind of thought were taken by all of us for the morrow. Be it so: but at least we might anticipate that the greatest and wisest of us, who were evidently the appointed teachers of the rest, would set themselves apart to seek out whatever could be surely known of the future destinies of their race; and to teach this in no rhetorical or ambiguous manner, but in the plainest and most severely earnest words.

Now, the highest representatives of men who have thus endeavoured, during the Christian era, to search out these deep things, and relate them, are Dante and Milton. There are none who for earnestness of thought, for mastery of word, can be classed with these. I am not at present, mind you, speaking of persons set apart in any priestly or pastoral office, to deliver creeds to us, or doctrines; but of men who try to discover and set forth, as far as by human intellect is possible, the facts of the other world. Divines may perhaps teach us how to arrive there, but only these two poets have in any powerful manner striven to discover, or in any definite words professed to tell, what we shall see and become there: or how those upper and nether worlds are, and have been, inhabited.

And what have they told us? Milton's account of the most important event in his whole system of the universe, the fall of the angels, is evidently unbelievable to himself; and the more so, that it is wholly founded on, and in a great part spoiled and degraded from, Hesiod's account of the decisive war of the younger gods with the Titans. The rest of his poem is a picturesque drama, in which every artifice of invention is visibly and consciously employed; not a single fact being, for an instant, conceived as tenable by any living faith. Dante's conception is far more intense, and, by himself, for the time, not to be escaped from; it is indeed a vision, but a vision only, and that one of the wildest that ever entranced a soul — a dream in which every grotesque type or phantasy of heathen tradition is renewed, and adorned; and the destinies of the Christian Church, under their most sacred symbols, become literally subordinate to the praise, and are only to be understood by the aid, of one dear Florentine maiden.

I tell you truly that, as I strive more with this strange lethargy and trance in myself, and awake to the meaning and power of life, it seems daily more amazing to me that men such as these should dare to play with the most precious truths, (or the most deadly untruths,) by which the whole human race listening to them could be informed, or deceived; — all the world their audiences for ever, with pleased ear, and passionate heart; — and yet, to this submissive infinitude of souls, and evermore succeeding and succeeding multitude, hungry for bread of life, they do but play upon sweetly modulated pipes; with pompous nomenclature adorn the councils of hell; touch a troubadour's guitar to the courses of the suns; and fill the openings of eternity, before which prophets have veiled their faces, and which angels desire to look into, with idle puppets of their scholastic imagination, and melancholy lights of frantic faith in their lost mortal love.

Is not this a mystery of life?

But more. We have to remember that these two great

teachers were both of them warped in their temper, and thwarted in their search for truth. They were men of intellectual war, unable, through darkness of controversy, or stress of personal grief, to discern where their own ambition modified their utterances of the moral law; or their own agony mingled with their anger at its violation. But greater men than these have been — innocent-hearted — too great for contest. Men, like Homer and Shakespeare, of so unrecognized personality, that it disappears in future ages, and becomes ghostly, like the tradition of a lost heathen god. Men, therefore, to whose unoffended, uncondemning sight, the whole of human nature reveals itself in a pathetic weakness, with which they will not strive; or in mournful and transitory strength, which they dare not praise. And all Pagan and Christian civilization thus becomes subject to them. It does not matter how little, or how much, any of us have read, either of Homer or Shakespeare; everything round us, in substance, or in thought, has been moulded by them. All Greek gentlemen were educated under Homer. All Roman gentlemen, by Greek literature. All Italian, and French, and English gentlemen, by Roman literature, and by its principles. Of the scope of Shakespeare, I will say only, that the intellectual measure of every man since born, in the domains of creative thought, may be assigned to him, according to the degree in which he has been taught by Shakespeare. Well, what do these two men, centres of mortal intelligence, deliver to us of conviction respecting what it most behoves that intelligence to grasp? What is their hope; their crown of rejoicing? what manner of exhortation have they for us, or of rebuke? what lies next their own hearts, and dictates their undying words? Have they any peace to promise to our unrest — any redemption to our misery?

Take Homer first, and think if there is any sadder image of human fate than the great Homeric story. The main features in the character of Achilles are its intense desire of justice, and its tenderness of affection. And in that bitter song of the Iliad,

this man, though aided continually by the wisest of the gods, and burning with the desire of justice in his heart, becomes yet through ill-governed passion, the most unjust of men; and, full of the deepest tenderness in his heart, becomes yet, through ill-governed passion, the most cruel of men. Intense alike in love and in friendship, he loses, first his mistress, and then his friend; for the sake of the one, he surrenders to death the armies of his own land; for the sake of the other, he surrenders all. Will a man lay down his life for his friend? Yea — even for his *dead* friend, this Achilles, though goddess-born, and goddess-taught, gives up his kingdom, his country, and his life — casts alike the innocent and guilty, with himself, into one gulf of slaughter, and dies at last by the hand of the basest of his adversaries. Is not this a mystery of life?

But what, then, is the message to us of our own poet, and searcher of hearts, after fifteen hundred years of Christian faith have been numbered over the graves of men? Are his words more cheerful than the heathen's — is his hope more near — his trust more sure — his reading of fate more happy? Ah, no! He differs from the Heathen poet chiefly in this — that he recognizes, for deliverance, no gods nigh at hand; and that, by petty chance — by momentary folly — by broken message — by fool's tyranny — or traitor's snare, the strongest and most righteous are brought to their ruin, and perish without word of hope. He indeed, as part of his rendering of character, ascribes the power and modesty of habitual devotion, to the gentle and just. The death-bed of Katharine is bright with vision of angels; and the great soldier-king, standing by his few dead, acknowledges the presence of the hand that can save alike by many or by few. But observe that from those who with deepest spirit, meditate, and with deepest passion, mourn, there are no such words as these; nor in their hearts are any such consolations. Instead of the perpetual sense of the helpful presence of the Deity, which, through all heathen tradition,

is the source of heroic strength, in battle, in exile, and in the valley of the shadow of death, we find only in the great Christian poet, the consciousness of a moral law, through which "the gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us;" and of the resolved arbitration of the destinies, that conclude into precision of doom what we feebly and blindly began; and force us, when our indiscretion serves us, and our deepest plots do pall, to the confession, that "there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will."

Is not this a mystery of life?

Be it so then. About this human life that is to be, or that is, the wise religious men tell us nothing that we can trust; and the wise contemplative men, nothing that can give us peace. But there is yet a third class, to whom we may turn — the wise practical men. We have sat at the feet of the poets who sang of heaven, and they have told us their dreams. We have listened to the poets who sang of earth, and they have chanted to us dirges, and words of despair. But there is one class of men more: — men, not capable of vision, nor sensitive to sorrow, but firm of purpose — practised in business; learned in all that can be, (by handling, —) known. Men, whose hearts and hopes are wholly in this present world, from whom, therefore, we may surely learn, at least, how, at present, conveniently to live in it. What will *they* say to us, or show us by example? These kings — these councillors — these statesmen and builders of kingdoms — these capitalists and men of business, who weigh the earth, and the dust of it, in a balance. They know the world, surely; and what is the mystery of life to us, is none to them. They can surely show us how to live, while we live, and to gather out of the present world what is best.

I think I can best tell you their answer, by telling you a dream I had once. For though I am no poet, I have dreams sometimes: — I dreamed I was at a child's May-day party, in which every means of entertainment had been provided for them, by a wise

and kind host. It was a stately house, with beautiful gardens attached to it; and the children had been set free in the rooms and gardens, with no care whatever but how to pass their afternoon rejoicingly. They did not, indeed, know much about what was to happen next day; and some of them, I thought, were a little frightened, because there was a chance of their being sent to a new school where there were examinations; but they kept the thoughts of that out of their heads as well as they could, and resolved to enjoy themselves. The house, I said, was in a beautiful garden, and in the garden were all kinds of flowers; sweet grassy banks for rest; and smooth lawns for play; and pleasant streams and woods; and rocky places for climbing. And the children were happy for a little while, but presently they separated themselves into parties; and then each party declared, it would have a piece of the garden for its own, and that none of the others should have anything to do with that piece. Next, they quarrelled violently, which pieces they would have; and at last the boys took up the thing, as boys should do, "practically," and fought in the flower-beds till there was hardly a flower standing; then they trampled down each other's bits of the garden out of spite; and the girls cried till they could cry no more; and so they all lay down at last breathless in the ruin, and waited for the time when they were to be taken home in the evening.[1]

Meanwhile, the children in the house had been making themselves happy also in their manner. For them, there had been provided every kind of indoors pleasure: there was music for them to dance to; and the library was open, with all manner of amusing books; and there was a museum, full of the most curious shells, and animals, and birds; and there was a workshop, with lathes and carpenter's tools, for the ingenious boys;

[1] I have sometimes been asked what this means. I intended it to set forth the wisdom of men in war contending for kingdoms, and what follows to set forth their wisdom in peace, contending for wealth.

and there were pretty fantastic dresses, for the girls to dress in; and there were microscopes, and kaleidoscopes; and whatever toys a child could fancy; and a table, in the dining-room, loaded with everything nice to eat.

But, in the midst of all this, it struck two or three of the more "practical" children, that they would like some of the brass-headed nails that studded the chairs; and so they set to work to pull them out. Presently, the others, who were reading, or looking at the shells, took a fancy to do the like; and, in a little while, all the children, nearly, were spraining their fingers, in pulling out brass-headed nails. With all that they could pull out, they were not satisfied; and then, everybody wanted some of somebody else's. And at last, the really practical and sensible ones declared, that nothing was of any real consequence, that afternoon, except to get plenty of brass-headed nails; and that the books, and the cakes, and the microscopes, were of no use at all in themselves, but only, if they could be exchanged for nail-heads. And, at last, they began to fight for nail-heads, as the others fought for the bits of garden. Only here and there, a despised one shrank away into a corner, and tried to get a little quiet with a book, in the midst of the noise; but all the practical ones thought of nothing else but counting nail-heads all the afternoon — even though they knew they would not be allowed to carry so much as one brass knob away with them. But no — it was — "who has most nails? I have a hundred, and you have fifty; or, I have a thousand and you have two. I must have as many as you before I leave the house, or I cannot possibly go home in peace." At last, they made so much noise that I awoke, and thought to myself, "What a false dream that is, of *children*." The child is the father of the man; and wiser. Children never do such foolish things. Only men do.

But there is yet one last class of persons to be interrogated. The wise religious men we have asked in vain; the wise contemplative men, in vain; the wise worldly men, in vain. But there

is another group yet. In the midst of this vanity of empty religion — of tragic contemplation — of wrathful and wretched ambition, and dispute for dust, there is yet one great group of persons, by whom all these disputers live — the persons who have determined, or have had it by a beneficent Providence determined for them, that they will do something useful; that whatever may be prepared for them hereafter, or happen to them here, they will, at least, deserve the food that God gives them by winning it honourably; and that, however fallen from the purity, or far from the peace, of Eden, they will carry out the duty of human dominion, though they have lost its felicity; and dress and keep the wilderness, though they no more can dress or keep the garden.

These — hewers of wood, and drawers of water — these bent under burdens, or torn of scourges — these, that dig and weave — that plant and build; workers in wood, and in marble, and in iron — by whom all food, clothing, habitation, furniture, and means of delight are produced, for themselves, and for all men beside; men, whose deeds are good, though their words may be few; men, whose lives are serviceable, be they never so short, and worthy of honour, be they never so humble; — from these, surely at least, we may receive some clear message of teaching: and pierce, for an instant, into the mystery of life, and of its arts.

Yes; from these, at last, we do receive a lesson. But I grieve to say, or rather — for that is the deeper truth of the matter — I rejoice to say — this message of theirs can only be received by joining them — not by thinking about them.

You sent for me to talk to you of art; and I have obeyed you in coming. But the main thing I have to tell you is, — that art must not be talked about. The fact that there is talk about it at all, signifies that it is ill done, or cannot be done. No true painter ever speaks, or ever has spoken, much of his art. The greatest speak nothing. Even Reynolds is no exception, for he

wrote of all that he could not himself do, and was utterly silent respecting all that he himself did.

The moment a man can really do his work, he becomes speechless about it. All words become idle to him — all theories.

Does a bird need to theorize about building its nest, or boast of it when built? All good work is essentially done that way — without hesitation, without difficulty, without boasting; and in the doers of the best, there is an inner and involuntary power which approximates literally to the instinct of an animal — nay, I am certain that in the most perfect human artists, reason does *not* supersede instinct, but is added to an instinct as much more divine than that of the lower animals as the human body is more beautiful than theirs; that a great singer sings not with less instinct than the nightingale, but with more — only more various, applicable, and governable; that a great architect does not build with less instinct than the beaver or the bee, but with more — with an innate cunning of proportion that embraces all beauty, and a divine ingenuity of skill that improvises all construction. But be that as it may — be the instinct less or more than that of inferior animals — like or unlike theirs, still the human art is dependent on that first, and then upon an amount of practice, of science, — and of imagination disciplined by thought, which the true possessor of it knows to be incommunicable, and the true critic of it, inexplicable, except through long process of laborious years. That journey of life's conquest, in which hills over hills, and Alps on Alps arose, and sank, — do you think you can make another trace it painlessly, by talking? Why, you cannot even carry us up an Alp, by talking. You can guide us up it, step by step, no otherwise — even so, best silently. You girls, who have been among the hills, know how the bad guide chatters and gesticulates, and it is "put your foot here," and "mind how you balance yourself there;" but the good guide walks on quietly, without a word, only with his eyes on you when need is, and his arm like an iron bar, if need be.

In that slow way, also, art can be taught — if you have faith in your guide, and will let his arm be to you as an iron bar when need is. But in what teacher of art have you such faith? Certainly not in me; for, as I told you at first, I know well enough it is only because you think I can talk, not because you think I know my business, that you let me speak to you at all. If I were to tell you anything that seemed to you strange, you would not believe it, and yet it would only be in telling you strange things that I could be of use to you. I could be of great use to you — infinite use, with brief saying, if you would believe it; but you would not, just because the thing that would be of real use would displease you. You are all wild, for instance, with admiration of Gustave Doré. Well, suppose I were to tell you, in the strongest terms I could use, that Gustave Doré's art was bad — bad, not in weakness, — not in failure, — but bad with dreadful power — the power of the Furies and the Harpies mingled, enraging, and polluting; that so long as you looked at it, no perception of pure or beautiful art was possible for you. Suppose I were to tell you that! What would be the use? Would you look at Gustave Doré less? Rather, more, I fancy. On the other hand, I could soon put you into good humour with me, if I chose. I know well enough what you like, and how to praise it to your better liking. I could talk to you about moonlight, and twilight, and spring flowers, and autumn leaves, and the Madonnas of Raphael — how motherly! and the Sibyls of Michael Angelo — how majestic! and the Saints of Angelico — how pious! and the Cherubs of Correggio — how delicious! Old as I am, I could play you a tune on the harp yet, that you would dance to. But neither you nor I should be a bit the better or wiser; or, if we were, our increased wisdom could be of no practical effect. For, indeed, the arts, as regards teachableness, differ from the sciences also in this, that their power is founded not merely on facts which can be communicated, but on dispositions which require to be created. Art is neither to be

achieved by effort of thinking, nor explained by accuracy of speaking. It is the instinctive and necessary result of powers which can only be developed through the mind of successive generations, and which finally burst into life under social conditions as slow of growth as the faculties they regulate. Whole æras of mighty history are summed, and the passions of dead myriads are concentrated, in the existence of a noble art; and if that noble art were among us, we should feel it and rejoice; not caring in the least to hear lectures on it; and since it is not among us, be assured we have to go back to the root of it, or, at least, to the place where the stock of it is yet alive, and the branches began to die.

And now, may I have your pardon for pointing out, partly with reference to matters which are at this time of greater moment than the arts — that if we undertook such recession to the vital germ of national arts that have decayed, we should find a more singular arrest of their power in Ireland than in any other European country. For in the eighth century, Ireland possessed a school of art in her manuscripts and sculpture, which, in many of its qualities — apparently in all essential qualities of decorative invention — was quite without rival; seeming as if it might have advanced to the highest triumph in architecture and in painting. But there was one fatal flaw in its nature, by which it was stayed, and stayed with a conspicuousness of pause to which there is no parallel: so that, long ago, in tracing the progress of European schools from infancy to strength, I chose for the students of Kensington, in a lecture since published, two characteristic examples of early art, of equal skill; but in the one case, skill which was progressive — in the other, skill which was at pause. In the one case, it was work receptive of correction — hungry for correction — and in the other, work which inherently rejected correction. I chose for them a corrigible Eve, and an incorrigible Angel, and I grieve to say that the incorrigible Angel was also an Irish Angel![1]

[1] See *The Two Paths*.

And the fatal difference lay wholly in this. In both pieces of art there was an equal falling short of the needs of fact; but the Lombardic Eve knew she was in the wrong, and the Irish Angel thought himself right. The eager Lombardic sculptor, though firmly insisting on his childish idea, yet showed in the irregular broken touches of the features, and the imperfect struggle for softer lines in the form, a perception of beauty and law that he could not render; there was the strain of effort, under conscious imperfection, in every line. But the Irish missal-painter had drawn his angel with no sense of failure, in happy complacency, and put red dots into the palms of each hand, and rounded the eyes into perfect circles, and, I regret to say, left the mouth out altogether, with perfect satisfaction to himself.

May I without offence ask you to consider whether this mode of arrest in ancient Irish art may not be indicative of points of character which even yet, in some measure, arrest your national power? I have seen much of Irish character, and have watched it closely, for I have also much loved it. And I think the form of failure to which it is most liable is this, that being generous-hearted, and wholly intending always to do right, it does not attend to the external laws of right, but thinks it must necessarily do right because it means to do so, and therefore does wrong without finding it out; and then when the consequences of its wrong come upon it, or upon others connected with it, it cannot conceive that the wrong is in anywise of its causing or of its doing, but flies into wrath, and a strange agony of desire for justice, as feeling itself wholly innocent, which leads it farther astray, until there is nothing that it is not capable of doing with a good conscience.

But mind, I do not mean to say that, in past or present relations between Ireland and England, you have been wrong, and we right. Far from that, I believe that in all great questions of principle, and in all details of administration of law, you have been usually right, and we wrong; sometimes in misunder-

standing you, sometimes in resolute iniquity to you. Nevertheless, in all disputes between states, though the strongest is nearly always mainly in the wrong, the weaker is often so in a minor degree; and I think we sometimes admit the possibility of our being in error, and you never do.

And now, returning to the broader question, what these arts and labours of life have to teach us of its mystery, this is the first of their lessons — that the more beautiful the art, the more it is essentially the work of people who *feel themselves wrong;* — who are striving for the fulfilment of a law, and the grasp of a loveliness, which they have not yet attained, which they feel even farther and farther from attaining, the more they strive for it. And yet, in still deeper sense, it is the work of people who know also that they are right. The very sense of inevitable error from their purpose marks the perfectness of that purpose, and the continued sense of failure arises from the continued opening of the eyes more clearly to all the sacredest laws of truth.

This is one lesson. The second is a very plain, and greatly precious one, namely: — that whenever the arts and labours of life are fulfilled in this spirit of striving against misrule, and doing whatever we have to do, honourably and perfectly, they invariably bring happiness, as much as seems possible to the nature of man. In all other paths, by which that happiness is pursued, there is disappointment, or destruction: for ambition and for passion there is no rest — no fruition; the fairest pleasures of youth perish in a darkness greater than their past light; and the loftiest and purest love too does but inflame the cloud of life with endless fire of pain. But, ascending from lowest to highest, through every scale of human industry, that industry worthily followed, gives peace. Ask the labourer in the field, at the forge, or in the mine; ask the patient, delicate-fingered artisan, or the strong-armed, fiery-hearted worker in bronze, and in marble, and with the colours of light; and none of these, who are true workmen, will ever tell you, that they have found the

law of heaven an unkind one — that in the sweat of their face they should eat bread, till they return to the ground; nor that they ever found it an unrewarded obedience, if, indeed, it was rendered faithfully to the command — "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do — do it with thy might."

These are the two great and constant lessons which our labourers teach us of the mystery of life. But there is another, and a sadder one, which they cannot teach us, which we must read on their tombstones.

"Do it with thy might." There have been myriads upon myriads of human creatures who have obeyed this law — who have put every breath and nerve of their being into its toil — who have devoted every hour, and exhausted every faculty — who have bequeathed their unaccomplished thoughts at death — who being dead, have yet spoken, by majesty of memory, and strength of example. And, at last, what has all this "Might" of humanity accomplished, in six thousand years of labour and sorrow? What has it *done?* Take the three chief occupations and arts of men, one by one, and count their achievements. Begin with the first — the lord of them all — agriculture. Six thousand years have passed since we were set to till the ground, from which we were taken. How much of it is tilled? How much of that which is, wisely or well? In the very centre and chief garden of Europe — where the two forms of parent Christianity have had their fortresses — where the noble Catholics of the Forest Cantons, and the noble Protestants of the Vaudois valleys, have maintained, for dateless ages, their faiths and liberties — there the unchecked Alpine rivers yet run wild in devastation; and the marshes, which a few hundred men could redeem with a year's labour, still blast their helpless inhabitants into fevered idiotism. That is so, in the centre of Europe! While, on the near coast of Africa, once the Garden of the Hesperides, an Arab woman, but a few sunsets since, ate her child, for famine. And, with all the

treasures of the East at our feet, we, in our own dominion, could not find a few grains of rice, for a people that asked of us no more; but stood by, and saw five hundred thousand of them perish of hunger.

Then, after agriculture, the art of kings, take the next head of human arts — weaving; the art of queens, honoured of all noble Heathen women, in the person of their virgin goddess — honoured of all Hebrew women, by the word of their wisest king — "She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she stretcheth out her hand to the poor. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself covering of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it, and delivereth girdles to the merchant." What have we done in all these thousands of years with this bright art of Greek maid and Christian matron? Six thousand years of weaving, and have we learned to weave? Might not every naked wall have been purple with tapestry, and every feeble breast fenced with sweet colours from the cold? What have we done? Our fingers are too few, it seems, to twist together some poor covering for our bodies. We set our streams to work for us, and choke the air with fire, to turn our spinning-wheels — and, — *are we yet clothed?* Are not the streets of the capitals of Europe foul with sale of cast clouts and rotten rags? Is not the beauty of your sweet children left in wretchedness of disgrace, while, with better honour, nature clothes the brood of the bird in its nest, and the suckling of the wolf in her den? And does not every winter's snow robe what you have not robed, and shroud what you have not shrouded; and every winter's wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter, by the voice of their Christ, — "I was naked, and ye clothed me not?"

Lastly — take the Art of Building — the strongest — proudest — most orderly — most enduring of the arts of man; that, of which the produce is in the surest manner accumulative, and

need not perish, or be replaced; but if once well done, will stand more strongly than the unbalanced rocks — more prevalently than the crumbling hills. The art which is associated with all civic pride and sacred principle; with which men record their power — satisfy their enthusiasm — make sure their defence — define and make dear their habitation. And, in six thousand years of building, what have we done? Of the greater part of all that skill and strength, *no* vestige is left, but fallen stones, that encumber the fields and impede the streams. But, from this waste of disorder, and of time, and of rage, what *is* left to us? Constructive and progressive creatures, that we are, with ruling brains, and forming hands, capable of fellowship, and thirsting for fame, can we not contend, in comfort, with the insects of the forest, or, in achievement, with the worm of the sea? The white surf rages in vain against the ramparts built by poor atoms of scarcely nascent life; but only ridges of formless ruin mark the places where once dwelt our noblest multitudes. The ant and the moth have cells for each of their young, but our little ones lie in festering heaps, in homes that consume them like graves; and night by night, from the corners of our streets, rises up the cry of the homeless — "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in."

Must it be always thus? Is our life for ever to be without profit — without possession? Shall the strength of its generations be as barren as death; or cast away their labour, as the wild figtree casts her untimely figs? Is it all a dream then — the desire of the eyes and the pride of life — or, if it be, might we not live in nobler dream than this? The poets and prophets, the wise men, and the scribes, though they have told us nothing about a life to come, have told us much about the life that is now. They have had — they also, — their dreams, and we have laughed at them. They have dreamed of mercy, and of justice; they have dreamed of peace and good-will; they have dreamed of labour undisappointed, and of rest undisturbed;

they have dreamed of fulness in harvest, and overflowing in store; they have dreamed of wisdom in council, and of providence in law; of gladness of parents, and strength of children, and glory of grey hairs. And at these visions of theirs we have mocked, and held them for idle and vain, unreal and unaccomplishable. What have we accomplished with our realities? Is this what has come of our worldly wisdom, tried against their folly? this, our mightiest possible, against their impotent ideal? or, have we only wandered among the spectra of a baser felicity, and chased phantoms of the tombs, instead of visions of the Almighty; and walked after the imaginations of our evil hearts, instead of after the counsels of Eternity, until our lives — not in the likeness of the cloud of heaven, but of the smoke of hell — have become "as a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away?"

Does it vanish then? Are you sure of that? — sure, that the nothingness of the grave will be a rest from this troubled nothingness; and that the coiling shadow, which disquiets itself in vain, cannot change into the smoke of the torment that ascends for ever? Will any answer that they *are* sure of it, and that there is no fear, nor hope, nor desire, nor labour, whither they go? Be it so; will you not, then, make as sure of the Life that now is, as you are of the Death that is to come? Your hearts are wholly in this world — will you not give them to it wisely, as well as perfectly? And see, first of all, that you *have* hearts, and sound hearts, too, to give. Because you have no heaven to look for, is that any reason that you should remain ignorant of this wonderful and infinite earth, which is firmly and instantly given you in possession? Although your days are numbered, and the following darkness sure, is it necessary that you should share the degradation of the brute, because you are condemned to its mortality; or live the life of the moth, and of the worm, because you are to companion them in the dust? Not so; we may have but a few thousands of days to spend, perhaps hundreds only — per-

haps, tens; nay, the longest of our time and best, looked back on, will be but as a moment, as the twinkling of an eye; still, we are men, not insects; we are living spirits, not passing clouds. "He maketh the winds His messengers; the momentary fire, His minister;" and shall we do less than *these?* Let us do the work of men while we bear the form of them; and, as we snatch our narrow portion of time out of Eternity, snatch also our narrow inheritance of passion out of Immortality — even though our lives *be* as vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

But there are some of you who believe not this — who think this cloud of life has no such close — that it is to float, revealed and illumined, upon the floor of heaven, in the day when He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him. Some day, you believe, within these five, or ten, or twenty years, for every one of us the judgment will be set, and the books opened. If that be true, far more than that must be true. Is there but one day of judgment? Why, for us every day is a day of judgment — every day is a Dies Iræ, and writes its irrevocable verdict in the flame of its West. Think you that judgment waits till the doors of the grave are opened? It waits at the doors of your houses — it waits at the corners of your streets; we are in the midst of judgment — the insects that we crush are our judges — the moments we fret away are our judges — the elements that feed us, judge, as they minister — and the pleasures that deceive us, judge, as they indulge. Let us, for our lives, do the work of Men while we bear the Form of them, if indeed those lives are *Not* as a vapour, and do *Not* vanish away.

"The work of men" — and what is that? Well, we may any of us know very quickly, on the condition of being wholly ready to do it. But many of us are for the most part thinking, not of what we are to do, but of what we are to get; and the best of us are sunk into the sin of Ananias, and it is a mortal one — we want to keep back part of the price; and we continually talk

of taking up our cross, as if the only harm in a cross was the *weight* of it — as if it was only a thing to be carried, instead of to be — crucified upon. "They that are His have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." Does that mean, think you, that in time of national distress, of religious trial, of crisis for every interest and hope of humanity — none of us will cease jesting, none cease idling, none put themselves to any wholesome work, none take so much as a tag of lace off their footmen's coats, to save the world? Or does it rather mean, that they are ready to leave houses, lands, and kindreds — yes, and life, if need be? Life! — some of us are ready enough to throw that away, joyless as we have made it. But "*station* in Life" — how many of us are ready to quit *that?* Is it not always the great objection, where there is a question of finding something useful to do — "We cannot leave our stations in Life?"

Those of us who really cannot — that is to say, who can only maintain themselves by continuing in some business or salaried office, have already something to do; and all that they have to see to, is that they do it honestly and with all their might. But with most people who use that apology, "remaining in the station of life to which Providence has called them," means keeping all the carriages, and all the footmen and large houses they can possibly pay for; and, once for all, I say that if ever Providence *did* put them into stations of that sort — which is not at all a matter of certainty — Providence is just now very distinctly calling them out again. Levi's station in life was the receipt of custom; and Peter's, the shore of Galilee; and Paul's, the ante-chambers of the High Priest, — which "station in life" each had to leave, with brief notice.

And, whatever our station in life may be, at this crisis, those of us who mean to fulfil our duty ought, first, to live on as little as we can; and, secondly, to do all the wholesome work for it we can, and to spend all we can spare in doing all the sure good we can.

And sure good is first in feeding people, then in dressing people, then in lodging people, and lastly in rightly pleasing people, with arts, or sciences, or any other subject of thought.

I say first in feeding; and, once for all, do not let yourselves be deceived by any of the common talk of "indiscriminate charity." The order to us is not to feed the deserving hungry, nor the industrious hungry, nor the amiable and well-intentioned hungry, but simply to feed the hungry. It is quite true, infallibly true, that if any man will not work, neither should he eat — think of that, and every time you sit down to your dinner, ladies and gentlemen, say solemnly, before you ask a blessing, "How much work have I done to-day for my dinner?" But the proper way to enforce that order on those below you, as well as on yourselves, is not to leave vagabonds and honest people to starve together, but very distinctly to discern and seize your vagabond; and shut your vagabond up out of honest people's way, and very sternly then see that, until he has worked, he does *not* eat. But the first thing is to be sure you have the food to give; and, therefore, to enforce the organization of vast activities in agriculture and in commerce, for the production of the wholesomest food, and proper storing and distribution of it, so that no famine shall any more be possible among civilised beings. There is plenty of work in this business alone, and at once, for any number of people who like to engage in it.

Secondly, dressing people — that is to say, urging every one within reach of your influence to be always neat and clean, and giving them means of being so. In so far as they absolutely refuse, you must give up the effort with respect to them, only taking care that no children within your sphere of influence shall any more be brought up with such habits; and that every person who is willing to dress with propriety shall have encouragement to do so. And the first absolutely necessary step towards this is the gradual adoption of a consistent dress for different ranks of persons, so that their rank shall be known by their dress; and

the restriction of the changes of fashion within certain limits. All which appears for the present quite impossible; but it is only so far as even difficult as it is difficult to conquer our vanity, frivolity, and desire to appear what we are not. And it is not, nor ever shall be, creed of mine, that these mean and shallow vices are unconquerable by Christian women.

And then, thirdly, lodging people, which you may think should have been put first, but I put it third, because we must feed and clothe people where we find them, and lodge them afterwards. And providing lodgment for them means a great deal of vigorous legislature, and cutting down of vested interests that stand in the way, and after that, or before that, so far as we can get it, thorough sanitary and remedial action in the houses that we have; and then the building of more, strongly, beautifully, and in groups of limited extent, kept in proportion to their streams, and walled round, so that there may be no festering and wretched suburb anywhere, but clean and busy street within, and the open country without, with a belt of beautiful garden and orchard round the walls, so that from any part of the city perfectly fresh air and grass, and sight of far horizon might be reachable in a few minutes' walk. This the final aim; but in immediate action every minor and possible good to be instantly done, when, and as, we can; roofs mended that have holes in them — fences patched that have gaps in them — walls buttressed that totter — and floors propped that shake; cleanliness and order enforced with our own hands and eyes, till we are breathless, every day. And all the fine arts will healthily follow. I myself have washed a flight of stone stairs all down, with bucket and broom, in a Savoy inn, where they hadn't washed their stairs since they first went up them! and I never made a better sketch than that afternoon.

These, then, are the three first needs of civilised life; and the law for every Christian man and woman is, that they shall be in direct service towards one of these three needs, as far as is con-

sistent with their own special occupation, and if they have no special business, then wholly in one of these services. And out of such exertion in plain duty all other good will come; for in this direct contention with material evil, you will find out the real nature of all evil; you will discern by the various kinds of resistance, what is really the fault and main antagonism to good; also you will find the most unexpected helps and profound lessons given, and truths will come thus down to us which the speculation of all our lives would never have raised us up to. You will find nearly every educational problem solved, as soon as you truly want to do something; everybody will become of use in their own fittest way, and will learn what is best for them to know in that use. Competitive examination will then, and not till then, be wholesome, because it will be daily, and calm, and in practice; and on these familiar arts, and minute, but certain and serviceable, knowledges, will be surely edified and sustained the greater arts and splendid theoretical sciences.

But much more than this. On such holy and simple practice will be founded, indeed, at last, an infallible religion. The greatest of all the mysteries of life, and the most terrible, is the corruption of even the sincerest religion, which is not daily founded on rational, effective, humble, and helpful action. Helpful action, observe! for there is just one law, which obeyed, keeps all religions pure — forgotten, makes them all false. Whenever in any religious faith, dark or bright, we allow our minds to dwell upon the points in which we differ from other people, we are wrong, and in the devil's power. That is the essence of the Pharisee's thanksgiving — "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." At every moment of our lives we should be trying to find out, not in what we differ with other people, but in what we agree with them; and the moment we find we can agree as to anything that should be done, kind or good, (and who but fools couldn't?) then do it; push at it together; you can't quarrel in a side-by-side push; but the

moment that even the best men stop pushing, and begin talking, they mistake their pugnacity for piety, and it's all over. I will not speak of the crimes which in past times have been committed in the name of Christ, nor of the follies which are at this hour held to be consistent with obedience to Him; but I *will* speak of the morbid corruption and waste of vital power in religious sentiment, by which the pure strength of that which should be the guiding soul of every nation, the splendour of its youthful manhood, and spotless light of its maidenhood, is averted or cast away. You may see continually girls who have never been taught to do a single useful thing thoroughly; who cannot sew, who cannot cook, who cannot cast an account, nor prepare a medicine, whose whole life has been passed either in play or in pride; you will find girls like these, when they are earnest-hearted, cast all their innate passion of religious spirit, which was meant by God to support them through the irksomeness of daily toil, into grievous and vain meditation over the meaning of the great Book, of which no syllable was ever yet to be understood but through a deed; all the instinctive wisdom and mercy of their womanhood made vain, and the glory of their pure consciences warped into fruitless agony concerning questions which the laws of common serviceable life would have either solved for them in an instant, or kept out of their way. Give such a girl any true work that will make her active in the dawn, and weary at night, with the consciousness that her fellow-creatures have indeed been the better for her day, and the powerless sorrow of her enthusiasm will transform itself into a majesty of radiant and beneficent peace.

So with our youths. We once taught them to make Latin verses, and called them educated; now we teach them to leap and to row, to hit a ball with a bat, and call them educated. Can they plough, can they sow, can they plant at the right time, or build with a steady hand? Is it the effort of their lives to be chaste, knightly, faithful, holy in thought, lovely in word and

deed? Indeed it is, with some, nay with many, and the strength of England is in them, and the hope; but we have to turn their courage from the toil of war to the toil of mercy: and their intellect from dispute of words to discernment of things; and their knighthood from the errantry of adventure to the state and fidelity of a kingly power. And then, indeed, shall abide, for them, and for us an incorruptible felicity, and an infallible religion; shall abide for us Faith, no more to be assailed by temptation, no more to be defended by wrath and by fear; — shall abide with us Hope, no more to be quenched by the years that overwhelm, or made ashamed by the shadows that betray; — shall abide for us, and with us, the greatest of these; the abiding will, the abiding name, of our Father. For the greatest of these, is Charity.

PROGRESS: ITS LAW AND CAUSE[1]

Herbert Spencer

(1820–1903)

[Of Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of evolution (and the friend of his fellow evolutionists, Darwin and Huxley), Edmund Gosse says, "No Englishman of his age has made so deep an intellectual impression on foreign thought, or is so widely known throughout Europe." Over against this, Andrew Lang's description of Spencer as "a single-hearted seeker after truth with a peculiar scientific style of his own," voices a frequent doubt as to whether Spencer, profound philosopher though he be, is entitled also to a high place in English literature. "Of all men," Lang continues, "who wrote much, earnestly, and persuasively he was the least of a reader; to much good literature he was even antipathetic." But if Spencer's style is questionable, the closeness of his logical structure is beyond praise; and if his reading in literature was little, his reading in nearly every other department of human knowledge was remarkably vast. Both of these facts are sufficiently evidenced by the following essay on *Progress* (1857), in which the comprehensiveness of Spencer's knowledge is even less remarkable than his power of shaping it — his prodigious gift for synthesis. To extend as he does in this essay the theory of evolution (or progress from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous), hitherto applied only to plants and animals, to all classes of phenomena in the entire universe, was in itself, as one of his reviewers said, a stupendous scientific induction. It is significant of Spencer's philosophic mind that he was not content to stop here. In his (really great) conclusion, he says that in all this vast induction (as in all the inductions of science) he has not been able to discover in the Equation of the Universe the Unknown Quantity; he has merely reduced the knowable part of the equation to a lower term. This, he believes, is all that science can ever do, for the more science discovers, the more it comes in contact with the unknowable. To Spencer, God is the Unknowable. This is not, however, the doctrine of atheism or of ordinary agnosticism. "The *Unknowable* is not a term of negation" [atheism], nor a term "employed *only* to express our ignorance [ordinary agnosticism], but it means that *Infinite Reality*, that Inscrutable

[1] *Westminster Review*, April, 1857.

Cause, of which the universe is but a manifestation, and which has an ever present disclosure in human *consciousness*."

For a good discussion of Herbert Spencer see *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition.]

THE current conception of Progress is somewhat shifting and indefinite. Sometimes it comprehends little more than simple growth — as of a nation in the number of its members and the extent of territory over which it has spread. Sometimes it has reference to quantity of material products — as when the advance of agriculture and manufactures is the topic. Sometimes the superior quality of these products is contemplated: and sometimes the new or improved appliances by which they are produced. When, again, we speak of moral or intellectual progress, we refer to the state of the individual or people exhibiting it; while, when the progress of Knowledge, of Science, of Art, is commented upon, we have in view certain abstract results of human thought and action. Not only, however, is the current conception of Progress more or less vague, but it is in great measure erroneous. It takes in not so much the reality of Progress as its accompaniments — not so much the substance as the shadow. That progress in intelligence seen during the growth of the child into the man, or the savage into the philosopher, is commonly regarded as consisting in the greater number of facts known and laws understood: whereas the actual progress consists in those internal modifications of which this increased knowledge is the expression. Social progress is supposed to consist in the produce of a greater quantity and variety of the articles required for satisfying men's wants; in the increasing security of person and property; in widening freedom of action: whereas, rightly understood, social progress consists in those changes of structure in the social organism which have entailed these consequences. The current conception is a teleological one. The phenomena are contemplated solely as bearing on human happiness. Only those changes are held to constitute

progress which directly or indirectly tend to heighten human happiness. And they are thought to constitute progress simply *because* they tend to heighten human happiness. But rightly to understand progress, we must inquire what is the nature of these changes, considered apart from our interests. Ceasing, for example, to regard the successive geological modifications that have taken place in the Earth, as modifications that have gradually fitted it for the habitation of Man, and as *therefore* a geological progress, we must seek to determine the character common to the modifications — the law to which they all conform. And similarly in every other case. Leaving out of sight concomitants and beneficial consequences, let us ask what Progress is in itself.

In respect to that progress which individual organisms display in the course of their evolution, this question has been answered by the Germans. The investigations of Wolff, Goethe, and Von Baer, have established the truth that the series of changes gone through during the development of a seed into a tree, or an ovum into an animal, constitute an advance from homogeneity of structure to heterogeneity of structure. In its primary stage, every germ consists of a substance that is uniform throughout, both in texture and chemical composition. The first step is the appearance of a difference between two parts of this substance; or, as the phenomenon is called in physiological language, a differentiation. Each of these differentiated divisions presently begins itself to exhibit some contrast of parts; and by and by these secondary differentiations become as definite as the original one. This process is continuously repeated — is simultaneously going on in all parts of the growing embryo; and by endless such differentiations there is finally produced that complex combination of tissues and organs constituting the adult animal or plant. This is the history of all organisms whatever. It is settled beyond dispute that organic progress consists in a change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous.

Now, we propose in the first place to show, that this law of organic progress is the law of all progress. Whether it be in the development of the Earth, in the development of Life upon its surface, in the development of Society, of Government, of Manufactures, of Commerce, of Language, Literature, Science, Art, this same evolution of the simple into the complex, through successive differentiations, holds throughout. From the earliest traceable cosmical changes down to the latest results of civilisation, we shall find that the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous, is that in which Progress essentially consists.

With the view of showing that *if* the Nebular Hypothesis be true, the genesis of the solar system supplies one illustration of this law, let us assume that the matter of which the sun and planets consist was once in a diffused form; and that from the gravitation of its atoms there resulted a gradual concentration. By the hypothesis, the solar system in its nascent state existed as an indefinitely extended and nearly homogeneous medium — a medium almost homogeneous in density, in temperature, and in other physical attributes. The first advance towards consolidation resulted in a differentiation between the occupied space which the nebulous mass still filled, and the unoccupied space which it previously filled. There simultaneously resulted a contrast in density and a contrast in temperature, between the interior and the exterior of this mass. And at the same time there arose throughout it rotatory movements, whose velocities varied according to their distances from its centre. These differentiations increased in number and degree until there was the organised group of sun, planets, and satellites, which we now know — a group which represents numerous contrasts of structure and action among its members. There are the immense contrasts between the sun and planets, in bulk and in weight; as well as the subordinate contrasts between one planet and another, and between the planets and their satel-

lites. There is the similarly marked contrast between the sun as almost stationary, and the planets as moving round him with great velocity; while there are the secondary contrasts between the velocities and periods of the several planets, and between their simple revolutions and the double ones of their satellites, which have to move round their primaries while moving round the sun. There is the yet further strong contrast between the sun and the planets in respect of temperature; and there is reason to suppose that the planets and satellites differ from each other in their proper heat, as well as in the heat they receive from the sun.

When we bear in mind that, in addition to these various contrasts, the planets and satellites also differ in respect to their distances from each other and their primary; in respect to the inclinations of their orbits, the inclinations of their axes, their times of rotation on their axes, their specific gravities, and their physical constitutions; we see what a high degree of heterogeneity the solar system exhibits, when compared with the almost complete homogeneity of the nebulous mass out of which it is supposed to have originated.

Passing from this hypothetical illustration, which must be taken for what it is worth, without prejudice to the general argument, let us descend to a more certain order of evidence. It is now generally agreed among geologists that the Earth was at first a mass of molten matter; and that it is still fluid and incandescent at the distance of a few miles beneath its surface. Originally, then, it was homogeneous in consistence, and, in virtue of the circulation that takes place in heated fluids, must have been comparatively homogeneous in temperature; and it must have been surrounded by an atmosphere consisting partly of the elements of air and water, and partly of those various other elements which assume a gaseous form at high temperatures. That slow cooling by radiation which is still going on at an inappreciable rate, and which, though originally far more rapid than now, necessarily required an immense time to produce any

decided change, must ultimately have resulted in the solidification of the portion most able to part with its heat — namely, the surface. In the thin crust thus formed we have the first marked differentiation. A still further cooling, a consequent thickening of this crust, and an accompanying deposition of all solidifiable elements contained in the atmosphere, must finally have been followed by the condensation of the water previously existing as vapour. A second marked differentiation must thus have arisen: and as the condensation must have taken place on the coolest parts of the surface — namely, about the poles — there must thus have resulted the first geographical distinction of parts. To these illustrations of growing heterogeneity, which, though deduced from the known laws of matter, may be regarded as more or less hypothetical, Geology adds an extensive series that have been inductively established. Its investigations show that the Earth has been continually becoming more heterogeneous in virtue of the multiplication of the strata which form its crust; further, that it has been becoming more heterogeneous in respect of the composition of these strata, the latter of which, being made from the detritus of the older ones, are many of them rendered highly complex by the mixture of materials they contain; and that this heterogeneity has been vastly increased by the action of the Earth's still molten nucleus upon its envelope, whence have resulted not only a great variety of igneous rocks, but the tilting up of sedimentary strata at all angles, the formation of faults and metallic veins, the production of endless dislocations and irregularities. Yet again, geologists teach us that the Earth's surface has been growing more varied in elevation — that the most ancient mountain systems are the smallest, and the Andes and Himalayas the most modern; while in all probability there have been corresponding changes in the bed of the ocean. As a consequence of these ceaseless differentiations, we now find that no considerable portion of the Earth's exposed surface is like any other portion, either in contour, in geologic

structure, or in chemical composition; and that in most parts it changes from mile to mile in all these characteristics.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that there has been simultaneously going on a gradual differentiation of climates. As fast as the Earth cooled and its crust solidified, there arose appreciable differences in temperature between those parts of its surface most exposed to the sun and those less exposed. Gradually, as the cooling progressed, these differences became more pronounced; until there finally resulted those marked contrasts between regions of perpetual ice and snow, regions where winter and summer alternately reign for periods varying according to the latitude, and regions where summer follows summer with scarcely an appreciable variation. At the same time the successive elevations and subsidences of different portions of the Earth's crust, tending as they have done to the present irregular distribution of land and sea, have entailed various modifications of climate beyond those dependent on latitude; while a yet further series of such modifications have been produced by increasing differences of elevation in the land, which have in sundry places brought arctic, temperate, and tropical climates to within a few miles of each other. And the general result of these changes is, that not only has every extensive region its own meteorologic conditions, but that every locality in each region differs more or less from others in those conditions, as in its structure, its contour, its soil. Thus, between our existing Earth, the phenomena of whose varied crust neither geographers, geologists, mineralogists, nor meteorologists have yet enumerated, and the molten globe out of which it was evolved, the contrast in heterogeneity is sufficiently striking.

When from the Earth itself we turn to the plants and animals that have lived, or still live, upon its surface, we find ourselves in some difficulty from lack of facts. That every existing organism has been developed out of the simple into the complex, is indeed the first established truth of all; and that every or-

ganism that has existed was similarly developed, is an inference which no physiologist will hesitate to draw. But when we pass from individual forms of life to Life in general, and inquire whether the same law is seen in the *ensemble* of its manifestations, — whether modern plants and animals are of more heterogeneous structure than ancient ones, and whether the earth's present Flora and Fauna are more heterogeneous than the Flora and Fauna of the past, — we find the evidence so fragmentary, that every conclusion is open to dispute. Two-thirds of the Earth's surface being covered by water; a great part of the exposed land being inaccessible to, or untravelled by, the geologist; the greater part of the remainder having been scarcely more than glanced at; and even the most familiar portions, as England, having been so imperfectly explored that a new series of strata has been added within these four years, — it is manifestly impossible for us to say with any certainty what creatures have, and what have not, existed at any particular period. Considering the perishable nature of many of the lower organic forms, the metamorphosis of many sedimentary strata, and the gaps that occur among the rest, we shall see further reason for distrusting our deductions. On the one hand, the repeated discovery of vertebrate remains in strata previously supposed to contain none, — of reptiles where only fish were thought to exist, — of mammals where it was believed there were no creatures higher than reptiles, — renders it daily more manifest how small is the value of negative evidence.

On the other hand, the worthlessness of the assumption that we have discovered the earliest, or anything like the earliest, organic remains, is becoming equally clear. That the oldest known sedimentary rocks have been greatly changed by igneous action, and that still older ones have been totally transformed by it, is becoming undeniable. And the fact that sedimentary strata earlier than any we know, have been melted up, being admitted, it must also be admitted that we cannot say

how far back in time this destruction of sedimentary strata has been going on. Thus it is manifest that the title, *Palæozoic*, as applied to the earliest known fossiliferous strata, involves a *petitio principii;* and that, for aught we know to the contrary, only the last few chapters of the Earth's biological history may have come down to us. On neither side, therefore, is the evidence conclusive. Nevertheless we cannot but think that, scanty as they are, the facts, taken altogether, tend to show both that the more heterogeneous organisms have been evolved in the later geologic periods, and that Life in general has been more heterogeneously manifested as time has advanced. Let us cite, in illustration, the one case of the *vertebrata*. The earliest known vertebrate remains are those of Fishes; and Fishes are the most homogeneous of the vertebrata. Later and more heterogeneous are Reptiles. Later still, and more heterogeneous still, are Mammals and Birds. If it be said, as it may fairly be said, that the Palæozoic deposits, not being estuary deposits, are not likely to contain the remains of terrestrial vertebrata, which may nevertheless have existed at that era, we reply that we are merely pointing to the leading facts, *such as they are.*

But to avoid any such criticism, let us take the mammalian subdivision only. The earliest known remains of mammals are those of small marsupials, which are the lowest of the mammalian type; while, conversely, the highest of the mammalian type — Man — is the most recent. The evidence that the vertebrate fauna, as a whole, has become more heterogeneous, is considerably stronger. To the argument that the vertebrate fauna of the Palæozoic period, consisting, so far as we know, entirely of Fishes, was less heterogeneous than the modern vertebrate fauna, which includes Reptiles, Birds, and Mammals, of multitudinous genera, it may be replied, as before, that estuary deposits of the Palæozoic period, could we find them, might contain other orders of vertebrata. But no such reply

can be made to the argument that whereas the marine vertebrata of the Palæozoic period consisted entirely of cartilaginous fishes, the marine vertebrata of later periods include numerous genera of osseous fishes; and that, therefore, the later marine vertebrate faunas are more heterogeneous than the oldest known one. Nor, again, can any such reply be made to the fact that there are far more numerous orders and genera of mammalian remains in the tertiary formations than in the secondary formations. Did we wish merely to make out the best case, we might dwell upon the opinion of Dr. Carpenter, who says that "the general facts of Palæontology appear to sanction the belief, that *the same plan* may be traced out in what may be called *the general life of the globe*, as in *the individual life* of every one of the forms of organised being which now people it." Or we might quote, as decisive, the judgment of Professor Owen, who holds that the earlier examples of each group of creatures severally departed less widely from archetypal generality than the later ones — were severally less unlike the fundamental form common to the group as a whole; that is to say — constituted a less heterogeneous group of creatures; and who further upholds the doctrine of a biological progression. But in deference to an authority for whom we have the highest respect, who considers that the evidence at present obtained does not justify a verdict either way, we are content to leave the question open.

Whether an advance from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is or is not displayed in the biological history of the globe, it is clearly enough displayed in the progress of the latest and most heterogeneous creature — Man. It is alike true that, during the period in which the Earth has been peopled, the human organism has grown more heterogeneous among the civilised divisions of the species; and that the species, as a whole, has been growing more heterogeneous in virtue of the multiplication of races and the differentiation of these races from each other.

In proof of the first of these positions, we may cite the fact

that, in the relative development of the limbs, the civilised man departs more widely from the general type of the placental mammalia than do the lower human races. While often possessing well-developed body and arms, the Papuan has extremely small legs: thus reminding us of the quadrumana, in which there is no great contrast in size between the hind and fore limbs. But in the European, the greater length and massiveness of the legs has become very marked — the fore and hind limbs are relatively more heterogeneous. Again, the greater ratio which the cranial bones bear to the facial bones illustrates the same truth. Among the vertebrata in general, progress is marked by an increasing heterogeneity in the vertebral column, and more especially in the vertebræ constituting the skull: the higher forms being distinguished by the relatively larger size of the bones which cover the brain, and the relatively smaller size of those which form the jaw, etc. Now, this characteristic, which is stronger in Man than in any other creature, is stronger in the European than in the savage. Moreover, judging from the greater extent and variety of faculty he exhibits, we may infer that the civilised man has also a more complex or heterogeneous nervous system than the uncivilised man: and indeed the fact is in part visible in the increased ratio which his cerebrum bears to the subjacent ganglia.

If further elucidation be needed, we may find it in every nursery. The infant European has sundry marked points of resemblance to the lower human races; as in the flatness of the alæ of the nose, the depression of its bridge, the divergence and forward opening of the nostrils, the form of the lips, the absence of a frontal sinus, the width between the eyes, the smallness of the legs. Now, as the development process by which these traits are turned into those of the adult European, is a continuation of that change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous displayed during the previous evolution of the embryo, which every physiologist will admit; it follows that the parallel

developmental process by which the like traits of the barbarous races have been turned into those of the civilised races, has also been a continuation of the change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. The truth of the second position — that Mankind, as a whole, have become more heterogeneous — is so obvious as scarcely to need illustration. Every work on Ethnology, by its divisions and subdivisions of races, bears testimony to it. Even were we to admit the hypothesis that Mankind originated from several separate stocks, it would still remain true, that as, from each of these stocks, there have sprung many now widely different tribes, which are proved by philological evidence to have had a common origin, the race as a whole is far less homogeneous than it once was. Add to which, that we have, in the Anglo-Americans, an example of a new variety arising within these few generations; and that, if we may trust to the description of observers, we are likely soon to have another such example in Australia.

On passing from Humanity under its individual form, to Humanity as socially embodied, we find the general law still more variously exemplified. The change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is displayed equally in the progress of civilisation as a whole, and in the progress of every tribe or nation; and is still going on with increasing rapidity. As we see in existing barbarous tribes, society in its first and lowest form is a homogeneous aggregation of individuals having like powers and like functions: the only marked difference of function being that which accompanies difference of sex. Every man is warrior, hunter, fisherman, tool-maker, builder; every woman performs the same drudgeries; every family is self-sufficing, and save for purposes of aggression and defence, might as well live apart from the rest. Very early, however, in the process of social evolution, we find an incipient differentiation between the governing and the governed. Some kind of chieftainship seems coeval with the first advance from the state of

separate wandering families to that of a nomadic tribe. The authority of the strongest makes itself felt among a body of savages as in a herd of animals, or a posse of schoolboys. At first, however, it is indefinite, uncertain; is shared by others of scarcely inferior power; and is unaccompanied by any difference in occupation or style of living: the first ruler kills his own game, makes his own weapons, builds his own hut, and economically considered, does not differ from others of his tribe. Gradually, as the tribe progresses, the contrast between the governing and the governed grows more decided. Supreme power becomes hereditary in one family; the head of that family, ceasing to provide for his own wants, is served by others; and he begins to assume the sole office of ruling.

At the same time there has been arising a co-ordinate species of government — that of Religion. As all ancient records and traditions prove, the earliest rulers are regarded as divine personages. The maxims and commands they uttered during their lives are held sacred after their deaths, and are enforced by their divinely-descended successors; who in their turns are promoted to the pantheon of the race, there to be worshipped and propitiated along with their predecessors: the most ancient of whom is the supreme god, and the rest subordinate gods. For a long time these connate forms of government — civil and religious — continue closely associated. For many generations the king continues to be the chief priest, and the priesthood to be members of the royal race. For many ages religious law continues to contain more or less of civil regulation, and civil law to possess more or less of religious sanction; and even among the most advanced nations these two controlling agencies are by no means completely differentiated from each other.

Having a common root with these, and gradually diverging from them, we find yet another controlling agency — that of Manners or ceremonial usages. All titles of honour are originally the names of the god-king; afterwards of God and the king;

still later of persons of high rank; and finally come, some of them, to be used between man and man. All forms of complimentary address were at first the expressions of submission from prisoners to their conqueror, or from subjects to their ruler, either human or divine — expressions that were afterwards used to propitiate subordinate authorities, and slowly descended into ordinary intercourse. All modes of salutation were once obeisances made before the monarch and used in worship of him after his death. Presently others of the god-descended race were similarly saluted; and by degrees some of the salutations have become the due of all.[1] Thus, no sooner does the originally homogeneous social mass differentiate into the governed and the governing parts, than this last exhibits an incipient differentiation into religious and secular — Church and State; while at the same time there begins to be differentiated from both, that less definite species of government which rules our daily intercourse — a species of government which, as we may see in heralds' colleges, in books of the peerage, in masters of ceremonies, is not without a certain embodiment of its own. Each of these is itself subject to successive differentiations. In the course of ages, there arises, as among ourselves, a highly complex political organisation of monarch, ministers, lords and commons, with their subordinate administrative departments, courts of justice, revenue offices, etc., supplemented in the provinces by municipal governments, county governments, parish or union governments — all of them more or less elaborated. By its side there grows up a highly complex religious organisation, with its various grades of officials, from archbishops down to sextons, its colleges, convocations, ecclesiastical courts, etc.; to all which must be added the ever multiplying independent sects, each with its general and local authorities. And at the same time there is developed a highly complex aggregation of customs, manners, and temporary fashions, enforced by society at large,

[1] For detailed proof of these assertions see essay on "Manners and Fashion."

and serving to control those minor transactions between man and man which are not regulated by civil and religious law. Moreover it is to be observed that this ever increasing heterogeneity in the governmental appliances of each nation, has been accompanied by an increasing heterogeneity in the governmental appliances of different nations; all of which are more or less unlike in their political systems and legislation, in their creeds and religious institutions, in their customs and ceremonial usages.

Simultaneously there has been going on a second differentiation of a more familiar kind; that, namely, by which the mass of the community has been segregated into distinct classes and orders of workers. While the governing part has undergone the complex development above detailed, the governed part has undergone an equally complex development, which has resulted in that minute division of labour characterising advanced nations. It is needless to trace out this progress from its first stages, up through the caste divisions of the East and the incorporated guilds of Europe, to the elaborate producing and distributing organisation existing among ourselves. Political economists have long since described the evolution which, beginning with a tribe whose members severally perform the same actions each for himself, ends with a civilised community whose members severally perform different actions for each other; and they have further pointed out the changes through which the solitary producer of any one commodity is transformed into a combination of producers who, united under a master, take separate parts in the manufacture of such commodity. But there are yet other and higher phases of this advance from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous in the industrial organisation of society.

Long after considerable progress has been made in the division of labour among different classes of workers, there is still little or no division of labour among the widely separated parts of the community; the nation continues comparatively homogeneous in the respect that in each district the same occupations are

pursued. But when roads and other means of transit become numerous and good, the different districts begin to assume different functions, and to become mutually dependent. The calico manufacture locates itself in this county, the woollen-cloth manufacture in that; silks are produced here, lace there; stockings in one place, shoes in another; pottery, hardware, cutlery, come to have their special towns; and ultimately every locality becomes more or less distinguished from the rest by the leading occupation carried on in it. Nay, more, this subdivision of functions shows itself not only among the different parts of the same nation, but among different nations. That exchange of commodities which free-trade promises so greatly to increase, will ultimately have the effect of specialising, in a greater or less degree, the industry of each people. So that beginning with a barbarous tribe, almost if not quite homogeneous in the functions of its members, the progress has been, and still is, towards an economic aggregation of the whole human race; growing ever more heterogeneous in respect of the separate functions assumed by separate nations, the separate functions assumed by the local sections of each nation, the separate functions assumed by the many kinds of makers and traders in each town, and the separate functions assumed by the workers united in producing each commodity.

Not only is the law thus clearly exemplified in the evolution of the social organism, but it is exemplified with equal clearness in the evolution of all products of human thought and action, whether concrete or abstract, real or ideal. Let us take Language as our first illustration.

The lowest form of language is the exclamation, by which an entire idea is vaguely conveyed through a single sound; as among the lower animals. That human language ever consisted solely of exclamations, and so was strictly homogeneous in respect of its parts of speech, we have no evidence. But that language can be traced down to a form in which nouns and verbs are its

only elements, is an established fact. In the gradual multiplication of parts of speech out of these primary ones — in the differentiation of verbs into active and passive, of nouns into abstract and concrete — in the rise of distinctions of mood, tense, person, of number and case — in the formation of auxiliary verbs, of adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, articles — in the divergence of those orders, genera, species, and varieties of parts of speech by which civilised races express minute modifications of meaning — we see a change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. And it may be remarked, in passing, that it is more especially in virtue of having carried this subdivision of function to a greater extent and completeness, that the English language is superior to all others.

Another aspect under which we may trace the development of language is the differentiation of words of allied meanings. Philology early disclosed the truth that in all languages words may be grouped into families having a common ancestry. An aboriginal name applied indiscriminately to each of an extensive and ill-defined class of things or actions, presently undergoes modifications by which the chief divisions of the class are expressed. These several names springing from the primitive root, themselves become the parents of other names still further modified. And by the aid of those systematic modes which presently arise, of making derivations and forming compound terms expressing still smaller distinctions, there is finally developed a tribe of words so heterogeneous in sound and meaning, that to the uninitiated it seems incredible that they should have had a common origin. Meanwhile from other roots there are being evolved other such tribes, until there results a language of some sixty thousand or more unlike words, signifying as many unlike objects, qualities, acts.

Yet another way in which language in general advances from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, is in the multiplication of languages. Whether as Max Müller and Bunsen think, all

languages have grown from one stock, or whether, as some philologists say, they have grown from two or more stocks, it is clear that since large families of languages, as the Indo-European, are of one parentage, they have become distinct through a process of continuous divergence. The same diffusion over the Earth's surface which has led to the differentiation of the race, has simultaneously led to a differentiation of their speech: a truth which we see further illustrated in each nation by the peculiarities of dialect found in several districts. Thus the progress of Language conforms to the general law, alike in the evolution of languages, in the evolution of families of words, and in the evolution of parts of speech.

On passing from spoken to written language, we come upon several classes of facts, all having similar implications. Written language is connate with Painting and Sculpture; and at first all three are appendages of Architecture, and have a direct connection with the primary form of all Government — the theocratic. Merely noting by the way the fact that sundry wild races, as for example the Australians and the tribes of South Africa, are given to depicting personages and events upon the walls of caves, which are probably regarded as sacred places, let us pass to the case of the Egyptians. Among them, as also among the Assyrians, we find mural paintings used to decorate the temple of the god and the palace of the king (which were, indeed, originally identical); and as such they were governmental appliances in the same sense that state-pageants and religious feasts were. Further, they were governmental appliances in virtue of representing the worship of the god, the triumphs of the god-king, the submission of his subjects, and the punishment of the rebellious. And yet again they were governmental, as being the products of an art reverenced by the people as a sacred mystery. From the habitual use of this pictorial representation there naturally grew up the but slightly-modified practice of picture-writing — a practice which was

found still extant among the Mexicans at the time they were discovered. By abbreviations analogous to those still going on in our own written and spoken language, the most familiar of these pictured figures were successively simplified; and ultimately there grew up a system of symbols, most of which had but a distant resemblance to the things for which they stood. The inference that the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians were thus produced, is confirmed by the fact that the picture-writing of the Mexicans was found to have given birth to a like family of ideographic forms; and among them, as among the Egyptians, these had been partially differentiated into the *kuriological* or imitative, and the *tropical* or symbolic: which were, however, used together in the same record. In Egypt, written language underwent a further differentiation: whence resulted the *hieratic* and the *epistolographic* or *enchorial:* both of which are derived from the original hieroglyphic. At the same time we find that for the expression of proper names which could not be otherwise conveyed, phonetic symbols were employed; and though it is alleged that the Egyptians never actually achieved complete alphabetic writing, yet it can scarcely be doubted that these phonetic symbols occasionally used in aid of their ideographic ones, were the germs out of which alphabetic writing grew. Once having become separate from hieroglyphics, alphabetic writing itself underwent numerous differentiations — multiplied alphabets were produced; between most of which, however, more or less connection can still be traced. And in each civilised nation there has now grown up, for the representation of one set of sounds, several sets of written signs used for distinct purposes. Finally, through a yet more important differentiation came printing; which, uniform in kind as it was at first, has since become multiform.

While written language was passing through its earlier stages of development, the mural decoration which formed its root was being differentiated into Painting and Sculpture. The gods,

kings, men, and animals represented, were originally marked by indented outlines and coloured. In most cases these outlines were of such depth, and the object they circumscribed so far rounded and marked out in its leading parts, as to form a species of work intermediate between intaglio and bas-relief. In other cases we see an advance upon this: the raised spaces between the figures being chiselled off, and the figures themselves appropriately tinted, a painted bas-relief was produced. The restored Assyrian architecture at Sydenham exhibits this style of art carried to greater perfection — the persons and things represented, though still barbarously coloured, are carved out with more truth and in greater detail: and in the winged lions and bulls used for the angles of gateways, we may see a considerable advance towards a completely sculptured figure; which, nevertheless, is still coloured, and still forms part of the building. But while in Assyria the production of a statue proper seems to have been little, if at all, attempted, we may trace in Egyptian art the gradual separation of the sculptured figure from the wall. A walk through the collection in the British Museum will clearly show this; while it will at the same time afford an opportunity of observing the evident traces which the independent statues bear of their derivation from bas-relief: seeing that nearly all of them not only display that union of the limbs with the body which is the characteristic of bas-relief, but have the back of the statue united from head to foot with a block which stands in place of the original wall. Greece repeated the leading stages of this progress. As in Egypt and Assyria, these twin arts were at first united with each other and with their parent, Architecture, and were the aids of Religion and Government. On the friezes of Greek temples, we see coloured bas-reliefs representing sacrifices, battles, processions, games — all in some sort religious. On the pediments we see painted sculptures more or less united with the tympanum, and having for subjects the triumphs of gods or heroes. Even when we come to statues that are

definitely separated from the buildings to which they pertain, we still find them coloured; and only in the later periods of Greek civilisation does the differentiation of sculpture from painting appear to have become complete.

In Christian art we may clearly trace a parallel re-genesis. All early paintings and sculptures throughout Europe were religious in subject — represented Christs, crucifixions, virgins, holy families, apostles, saints. They formed integral parts of church architecture, and were among the means of exciting worship; as in Roman Catholic countries they still are. Moreover, the early sculptures of Christ on the cross, of virgins, of saints, were coloured: and it needs but to call to mind the painted madonnas and crucifixes still abundant in continental churches and highways, to perceive the significant fact that painting and sculpture continue in closest connection with each other where they continue in closest connection with their parent. Even when Christian sculpture was pretty clearly differentiated from painting, it was still religious and governmental in its subjects — was used for tombs in churches and statues of kings: while, at the same time, painting, where not purely ecclesiastical, was applied to the decoration of palaces, and besides representing royal personages, was almost wholly devoted to sacred legends. Only in quite recent times have painting and sculpture become entirely secular arts. Only within these few centuries has painting been divided into historical, landscape, marine, architectural, genre, animal, still-life, etc., and sculpture grown heterogeneous in respect of the variety of real and ideal subjects with which it occupies itself.

Strange as it seems then, we find it no less true, that all forms of written language, of painting, and of sculpture, have a common root in the politico-religious decorations of ancient temples and palaces. Little resemblance as they now have, the bust that stands on the console, the landscape that hangs against the wall, and the copy of the *Times* lying upon the table, are remotely

akin; not only in nature, but by extraction. The brazen face of the knocker which the postman has just lifted, is related not only to the woodcuts of the *Illustrated London News* which he is delivering, but to the characters of the *billet-doux* which accompanies it. Between the painted window, the prayer-book on which its light falls, and the adjacent monument, there is consanguinity. The effigies on our coins, the signs over shops, the figures that fill every ledger, the coats of arms outside the carriage panel, and the placards inside the omnibus, are, in common with dolls, blue-books, paper-hangings, lineally descended from the rude sculpture-paintings in which the Egyptians represented the triumphs and worship of their god-kings. Perhaps no example can be given which more vividly illustrates the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the products that in course of time may arise by successive differentiations from a common stock.

Before passing to other classes of facts, it should be observed that the evolution of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous is displayed not only in the separation of Painting and Sculpture from Architecture and from each other, and in the greater variety of subjects they embody, but it is further shown in the structure of each work. A modern picture or statue is of far more heterogeneous nature than an ancient one. An Egyptian sculpture-fresco represents all its figures as on one plane — that is, at the same distance from the eye; and so is less heterogeneous than a painting that represents them as at various distances from the eye. It exhibits all objects as exposed to the same degree of light; and so is less heterogeneous than a painting which exhibits different objects and different parts of each object as in different degrees of light. It uses scarcely any but the primary colours, and these in their full intensity; and so is less heterogeneous than a painting which, introducing the primary colours but sparingly, employs an endless variety of intermediate tints, each of heterogeneous composition, and differing from the rest not only in quality but in intensity. Moreover, we see in these

earliest works a great uniformity of conception. The same arrangement of figures is perpetually reproduced — the same actions, attitudes, faces, dresses. In Egypt the modes of representation were so fixed that it was sacrilege to introduce a novelty; and indeed it could have been only in consequence of a fixed mode of representation that a system of hieroglyphics became possible. The Assyrian bas-reliefs display parallel characters. Deities, kings, attendants, winged figures and animals, are severally depicted in like positions, holding like implements, doing like things, and with like expression or non-expression of face. If a palm-grove is introduced, all the trees are of the same height, have the same number of leaves, and are equidistant. When water is imitated, each wave is a counterpart of the rest; and the fish, almost always of one kind, are evenly distributed over the surface. The beards of the kings, the gods, and the winged figures, are everywhere similar: as are the manes of the lions, and equally so those of the horses. Hair is represented throughout by one form of curl. The king's beard is quite architecturally built up of compound tiers of uniform curls, alternating with twisted tiers placed in a transverse direction, and arranged with perfect regularity; and the terminal tufts of the bulls' tails are represented in exactly the same manner. Without tracing out analogous facts in early Christian art, in which, though less striking, they are still visible, the advance in heterogeneity will be sufficiently manifest on remembering that in the pictures of our own day the composition is endlessly varied; the attitudes, faces, expressions, unlike; the subordinate objects different in size, form, position, texture; and more or less of contrast even in the smallest details. Or, if we compare an Egyptian statue, seated bolt upright on a block with hands on knees, fingers outspread and parallel, eyes looking straight forward, and the two sides perfectly symmetrical in every particular, with a statue of the advanced Greek or the modern school, which is asymmetrical in respect of the position

of the head, the body, the limbs, the arrangement of the hair, dress, appendages, and in its relations to neighbouring objects, we shall see the change from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous clearly manifested.

In the co-ordinate origin and gradual differentiation of Poetry, Music and Dancing, we have another series of illustrations. Rhythm in speech, rhythm in sound, and rhythm in motion, were in the beginning parts of the same thing, and have only in process of time become separate things. Among various existing barbarous tribes we find them still united. The dances of savages are accompanied by some kind of monotonous chant, the clapping of hands, the striking of rude instruments: there are measured movements, measured words, and measured tones; and the whole ceremony, usually having reference to war or sacrifice, is of governmental character. In the early records of the historic races we similarly find these three forms of metrical action united in religious festivals. In the Hebrew writings we read that the triumphal ode composed by Moses on the defeat of the Egyptians, was sung to an accompaniment of dancing and timbrels. The Israelites danced and sung "at the inauguration of the golden calf. And as it is generally agreed that this representation of the Deity was borrowed from the mysteries of Apis, it is probable that the dancing was copied from that of the Egyptians on those occasions." There was an annual dance in Shiloh on the sacred festival; and David danced before the ark. Again, in Greece the like relation is everywhere seen; the original type being there, as probably in other cases, a simultaneous chanting and mimetic representation of the life and adventures of the god. The Spartan dances were accompanied by hymns and songs; and in general the Greeks had "no festivals or religious assemblies but what were accompanied with songs and dances" — both of them being forms of worship used before altars. Among the Romans, too, there were sacred dances: the Salian and Lupercalian being named as of that kind.

And even in Christian countries, as at Limoges, in comparatively recent times, the people have danced in the choir in honour of a saint. The incipient separation of these once united arts from each other and from religion, was early visible in Greece. Probably diverging from dances partly religious, partly warlike, as the Corybantian, came the war dances proper, of which there were various kinds; and from these resulted secular dances. Meanwhile Music and Poetry, though still united, came to have an existence separate from dancing. The aboriginal Greek poems, religious in subject, were not recited, but chanted; and though at first the chant of the poet was accompanied by the dance of the chorus, it ultimately grew into independence. Later still, when the poem had been differentiated into epic and lyric — when it became the custom to sing the lyric and recite the epic — poetry proper was born. As during the same period musical instruments were being multiplied, we may presume that music came to have an existence apart from words. And both of them were beginning to assume other forms besides the religious. Facts having like implications might be cited from the histories of later times and people: as the practices of our own early minstrels, who sang to the harp heroic narratives versified by themselves to music of their own composition: thus uniting the now separate offices of poet, composer, vocalist, and instrumentalist. But, without further illustration, the common origin and gradual differentiation of Dancing, Poetry, and Music will be sufficiently manifest.

The advance from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous is displayed not only in the separation of these arts from each other and from religion, but also in the multiplied differentiations which each of them afterwards undergoes. Not to dwell upon the numberless kinds of dancing that have, in course of time, come into use; and not to occupy space in detaining the progress of poetry, as seen in the development of the various forms of metre, of rhyme, and of general organisation; let us

confine our attention to music as a type of the group. As argued by Dr. Burney, and as implied by the customs of still extant barbarous races, the first musical instruments were, without doubt, percussive, — sticks, calabashes, tom-toms — and were used simply to mark the time of the dance; and in this constant repetition of the same sound, we see music in its most homogeneous form.

The Egyptians had a lyre with three strings. The early lyre of the Greeks had four, constituting their tetrachord. In course of some centuries lyres of seven and eight strings were employed. And, by the expiration of a thousand years, they had advanced to their "great system" of the double octave. Through all which changes there of course arose a greater heterogeneity of melody. Simultaneously there came into use the different modes — Dorian, Ionian, Phrygian, Æolian, and Lydian — answering to our keys; and of these there were ultimately fifteen. As yet, however, there was but little heterogeneity in the time of their music.

Instrumental music during this period being merely the accompaniment of vocal music, and vocal music being completely subordinated to words, the singer being also the poet, chanting his own compositions and making the lengths of his notes agree with the feet of his verses, — there unavoidably arose a tiresome uniformity of measure, which, as Dr. Burney says, "no resources of melody could disguise." Lacking the complex rhythm obtained by our equal bars and unequal notes the only rhythm was that produced by the quantity of the syllables and was of necessity comparatively monotonous. And further, it may be observed that the chant thus resulting, being like recitative, was much less clearly differentiated from ordinary speech than is our modern song.

Nevertheless, in virtue of the extended range of notes in use, the variety of modes, the occasional variations of time consequent on changes of metre, and the multiplication of instruments,

music had, towards the close of Greek civilisation, attained to considerable heterogeneity — not indeed as compared with our music, but as compared with that which preceded it. As yet, however, there existed nothing but melody: harmony was unknown. It was not until Christian church-music had reached some development, that music in parts was evolved; and then it came into existence through a very unobtrusive differentiation. Difficult as it may be to conceive *à priori* how the advance from melody to harmony could take place without a sudden leap, it is none the less true that it did so. The circumstance which prepared the way for it was the employment of two choirs singing alternately the same air. Afterwards it became the practice — very possibly first suggested by a mistake — for the second choir to commence before the first had ceased; thus producing a fugue.

With the simple airs then in use, a partially harmonious fugue might not improbably thus result: and a very partially harmonious fugue satisfied the ears of that age, as we know from still preserved examples. The idea having once been given, the composing of airs productive of fugal harmony would naturally grow up; as in some way it *did* grow up out of this alternate choir-singing. And from the fugue to concerted music of two, three, four, and more parts, the transition was easy. Without pointing out in detail the increasing complexity that resulted from introducing notes of various lengths, from the multiplication of keys, from the use of accidentals, from varieties of time, and so forth, it needs but to contrast music as it is, with music as it was, to see how immense is the increase of heterogeneity. We see this if, looking at music in its *ensemble*, we enumerate its many different genera and species — if we consider the divisions into vocal, instrumental, and mixed; and their subdivisions into music for different voices and different instruments — if we observe the many forms of sacred music, from the simple hymn, the chant, the canon, motet, anthem,

etc., up to the oratorio; and the still more numerous forms of secular music, from the ballad up to the serenata, from the instrumental solo up to the symphony.

Again, the same truth is seen on comparing any one sample of aboriginal music with a sample of modern music — even an ordinary song for the piano; which we find to be relatively highly heterogeneous, not only in respect of the varieties in the pitch and in the length of the notes, the number of different notes sounding at the same instant in company with the voice, and the variations of strength with which they are sounded and sung, but in respect of the changes of key, the changes of time, the changes of *timbre* of the voice, and the many other modifications of expression. While between the old monotonous dance-chant and a grand opera of our own day, with its endless orchestral complexities and vocal combinations, the contrast in heterogeneity is so extreme that it seems scarcely credible that the one should have been the ancestor of the other.

Were they needed, many further illustrations might be cited. Going back to the early time when the deeds of the god-king, chanted and mimetically represented in dances round his altar, were further narrated in picture-writings on the walls of temples and palaces, and so constituted a rude literature, we might trace the development of Literature through phases in which, as in the Hebrew Scriptures, it presents in one work theology, cosmogony, history, biography, civil law, ethics, poetry; through other phases in which, as in the Iliad, the religious, martial, historical, the epic, dramatic, and lyric elements are similarly commingled; down to its present heterogeneous development, in which its divisions and subdivisions are so numerous and varied as to defy complete classification. Or we might trace out the evolution of Science; beginning with the era in which it was not yet differentiated from Art, and was, in union with Art, the handmaid of Religion; passing through the era in which the sciences were so few and rudimentary, as to be simultane-

ously cultivated by the same philosophers; and ending with the era in which the genera and species are so numerous that few can enumerate them, and no one can adequately grasp even one genus. Or we might do the like with Architecture, with the Drama, with Dress.

But doubtless the reader is already weary of illustrations; and our promise has been amply fulfilled. We believe we have shown beyond question, that that which the German physiologists have found to be the law of organic development, is the law of all development. The advance from the simple to the complex, through a process of successive differentiations, is seen alike in the earliest changes of the Universe to which we can reason our way back; and in the earliest changes which we can inductively establish; it is seen in the geologic and climatic evolution of the Earth, and of every single organism on its surface; it is seen in the evolution of Humanity, whether contemplated in the civilised individual, or in the aggregation of races; it is seen in the evolution of Society in respect alike of its political, its religious, and its economical organisation; and it is seen in the evolution of all those endless concrete and abstract products of human activity which constitute the environment of our daily life. From the remotest past which Science can fathom, up to the novelties of yesterday, that in which Progress essentially consists, is the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous.

And now, from this uniformity of procedure, may we not infer some fundamental necessity whence it results? May we not rationally seek for some all-pervading principle which determines this all-pervading process of things? Does not the universality of the *law* imply a universal *cause?*

That we can fathom such cause, noumenally considered, is not to be supposed. To do this would be to solve that ultimate mystery which must ever transcend human intelligence. But

it still may be possible for us to reduce the law of all Progress, above established, from the condition of an empirical generalisation, to the condition of a rational generalisation. Just as it was possible to interpret Kepler's laws as necessary consequences of the law of gravitation; so it may be possible to interpret this law of Progress, in its multiform manifestations, as the necessary consequence of some similarly universal principle. As gravitation was assignable as the *cause* of each of the groups of phenomena which Kepler formulated; so may some equally simple attribute of things be assignable as the cause of each of the groups of phenomena formulated in the foregoing pages. We may be able to affiliate all these varied and complex evolutions of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous, upon certain simple facts of immediate experience, which, in virtue of endless repetition, we regard as necessary.

The probability of a common cause, and the possibility of formulating it, being granted, it will be well, before going further, to consider what must be the general characteristics of such cause, and in what direction we ought to look for it. We can with certainty predict that it has a high degree of generality; seeing that it is common to such infinitely varied phenomena: just in proportion to the universality of its application must be the abstractness of its character. We need not expect to see in it an obvious solution of this or that form of Progress; because it equally refers to forms of Progress bearing little apparent resemblance to them: its association with multiform orders of facts, involves its dissociation from any particular order of facts. Being that which determines Progress of every kind — astronomic, geologic, organic, ethnologic, social, economic, artistic, etc. — it must be concerned with some fundamental attribute possessed in common by these; and must be expressible in terms of this fundamental attribute. The only obvious respect in which all kinds of Progress are alike, is, that they are modes of *change;* and hence, in some characteristic of changes

in general, the desired solution will probably be found. We may suspect *à priori* that in some law of change lies the explanation of this universal transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous.

Thus much premised, we pass at once to the statement of the law, which is this: — *Every active force produces more than one change — every cause produces more than one effect.*

Before this law can be duly comprehended, a few examples must be looked at. When one body is struck against another, that which we usually regard as the effect, is a change of position or motion in one or both bodies. But a moment's thought shows us that this is a careless and very incomplete view of the matter. Besides the visible mechanical result, sound is produced; or, to speak accurately, a vibration in one or both bodies, and in the surrounding air: and under some circumstances we call this the effect. Moreover, the air has not only been made to vibrate, but has had sundry currents caused in it by the transit of the bodies. Further, there is a disarrangement of the particles of the two bodies in the neighbourhood of their point of collision; amounting in some cases to a visible condensation. Yet more, this condensation is accompanied by the disengagement of heat. In some cases a spark — that is, light — results, from the incandescence of a portion struck off; and sometimes this incandescence is associated with chemical combination.

Thus, by the original mechanical force expended in the collision, at least five, and often more, different kinds of changes have been produced. Take, again, the lighting of a candle. Primarily this is a chemical change consequent on a rise of temperature. The process of combination having once been set going by extraneous heat, there is a continued formation of carbonic acid, water, etc. — in itself a result more complex than the extraneous heat that first caused it. But accompanying this process of combination there is a production of heat;

there is a production of light; there is an ascending column of hot gases generated; there are currents established in the surrounding air. Moreover the decomposition of one force into many forces does not end here: each of the several changes produced becomes the parent of further changes. The carbonic acid given off will by and by combine with some base; or under the influence of sunshine give up its carbon to the leaf of a plant. The water will modify the hygrometric state of the air around; or, if the current of hot gases containing it come against a cold body, will be condensed: altering the temperature, and perhaps the chemical state, of the surface it covers. The heat given out melts the subjacent tallow, and expands whatever it warms. The light, falling on various substances, calls forth from them reactions by which it is modified; and so divers colours are produced. Similarly even with these secondary actions, which may be traced out into ever-multiplying ramifications, until they become too minute to be appreciated. And thus it is with all changes whatever. No case can be named in which an active force does not evolve forces of several kinds, and each of these, other groups of forces. Universally the effect is more complex than the cause.

Doubtless the reader already foresees the course of our argument. This multiplication of results, which is displayed in every event of to-day, has been going on from the beginning; and is true of the grandest phenomena of the universe as of the most insignificant. From the law that every active force produces more than one change, it is an inevitable corollary that through all time there has been an ever-growing complication of things. Starting with the ultimate fact that every cause produces more than one effect, we may readily see that throughout creation there must have gone on, and must still go on, a never-ceasing transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous. But let us trace out this truth in detail.

Without committing ourselves to it as more than a specula-

tion, though a highly probable one, let us again commence with the evolution of the solar system out of a nebulous medium.[1] From the mutual attraction of the atoms of a diffused mass whose form is unsymmetrical, there results not only condensation but rotation: gravitation simultaneously generates both the centripetal and the centrifugal forces. While the condensation and the rate of rotation are progressively increasing, the approach of the atoms necessarily generates a progressively increasing temperature. As this temperature rises, light begins to be evolved; and ultimately there results a revolving sphere of fluid matter radiating intense heat and light — a sun.

There are good reasons for believing that, in consequence of the high tangential velocity, and consequent centrifugal force, acquired by the outer parts of the condensing nebulous mass, there must be a periodical detachment of rotating rings; and that, from the breaking up of these nebulous rings, there must arise masses which in the course of their condensation repeat the actions of the parent mass, and so produce planets and their satellites — an inference strongly supported by the still extant rings of Saturn.

Should it hereafter be satisfactorily shown that planets and satellites were thus generated, a striking illustration will be afforded of the highly heterogeneous effects produced by the primary homogeneous cause; but it will serve our present purpose to point to the fact that from the mutual attraction of the particles of an irregular nebulous mass there result condensation, rotation, heat, and light.

It follows as a corollary from the Nebular Hypothesis, that the Earth must at first have been incandescent; and whether the Nebular Hypothesis be true or not, this original incandes-

[1] The idea that the Nebular Hypothesis has been disproved because what were thought to be existing nebulæ have been resolved into clusters of stars is almost beneath notice. *A priori* it was highly improbable, if not impossible, that nebulous masses should still remain uncondensed, while others have been condensed millions of years ago.

cence of the Earth is now inductively established — or, if not established, at least rendered so highly probable that it is a generally admitted geological doctrine. Let us look first at the astronomical attributes of this once molten globe. From its rotation there result the oblateness of its form, the alternations of day and night, and (under the influence of the moon) the tides, aqueous and atmospheric. From the inclination of its axis, there result the precession of the equinoxes and the many differences of the seasons, both simultaneous and successive, that pervade its surface. Thus the multiplication of effects is obvious. Several of the differentiations due to the gradual cooling of the Earth have been already noticed — as the formation of a crust, the solidification of sublimed elements, the precipitation of water, etc., — and we here again refer to them merely to point out that they are simultaneous effects of the one cause, diminishing heat.

Let us now, however, observe the multiplied changes afterwards arising from the continuance of this one cause. The cooling of the earth involves its contraction. Hence the solid crust first formed is presently too large for the shrinking nucleus; and as it cannot support itself, inevitably follows the nucleus. But a spheroidal envelope cannot sink down into contact with a smaller internal spheroid, without disruption; it must run into wrinkles as the rind of an apple does when the bulk of its interior decreases from evaporation. As the cooling progresses and the envelope thickens, the ridges consequent on these contractions must become greater, rising ultimately into hills and mountains; and the later systems of mountains thus produced must not only be higher, as we find them to be, but they must be longer, as we also find them to be. Thus, leaving out of view other modifying forces, we see what immense heterogeneity of surface has arisen from the one cause, loss of heat — a heterogeneity which the telescope shows us to be paralleled on the face of the moon, where aqueous and atmospheric agencies have been absent.

But we have yet to notice another kind of heterogeneity of surface similarly and simultaneously caused. While the Earth's crust was still thin, the ridges produced by its contraction must not only have been small, but the spaces between these ridges must have rested with great evenness upon the subjacent liquid spheroid; and the water in those arctic and antarctic regions in which it first condensed, must have been evenly distributed. But as fast as the crust grew thicker and gained corresponding strength, the lines of fracture from time to time caused in it, must have occurred at greater distances apart; the intermediate surfaces must have followed the contracting nucleus with less uniformity; and there must have resulted larger areas of land and water. If any one, after wrapping up an orange in wet tissue paper, and observing not only how small are the wrinkles, but how evenly the intervening spaces lie upon the surface of the orange, will then wrap it up in thick cartridge-paper, and note both the greater height of the ridges and the much larger spaces throughout which the paper does not touch the orange, he will realise the fact, that as the Earth's solid envelope grew thicker, the areas of elevation and depression must have become greater. In place of islands more or less homogeneously scattered over an all-embracing sea, there must have gradually arisen heterogeneous arrangements of continent and ocean, such as we now know.

Once more, this double change in the extent and in the elevation of the lands, involved yet another species of heterogeneity, that of coast-line. A tolerably even surface raised out of the ocean, must have a simple, regular sea-margin; but a surface varied by table-lands and intersected by mountain-chains must, when raised out of the ocean, have an outline extremely irregular both in its leading features and in its details. Thus endless is the accumulation of geological and geographical results slowly brought about by this one cause — the contraction of the Earth.

When we pass from the agency which geologists term igneous, to aqueous and atmospheric agencies, we see the like ever growing complications of effects. The denuding actions of air and water have, from the beginning, been modifying every exposed surface; everywhere causing many different changes. Oxidation, heat, wind, frost, rain, glaciers, rivers, tides, waves, have been unceasingly producing disintegration; varying in kind and amount according to local circumstances. Acting upon a tract of granite, they here work scarcely an appreciable effect; there cause exfoliations of the surface, and a resulting heap of *débris* and boulders; and elsewhere, after decomposing the feldspar into a white clay, carry away this and the accompanying quartz and mica, and deposit them in separate beds, fluviatile and marine. When the exposed land consists of several unlike formations, sedimentary and igneous, the denudation produces changes proportionably more heterogeneous. The formations being disintegrable in different degrees, there follows an increased irregularity of surface. The areas drained by different rivers being differently constituted, these rivers carry down to the sea different combinations of ingredients; and so sundry new strata of distinct composition are formed.

And here indeed we may see very simply illustrated, the truth, which we shall presently have to trace out in more involved cases, that in proportion to the heterogeneity of the object or objects on which any force expends itself, is the heterogeneity of the results. A continent of complex structure, exposing many strata irregularly distributed, raised to various levels, tilted up at all angles, must, under the same denuding agencies, give origin to immensely multiplied results; each district must be differently modified; each river must carry down a different kind of detritus; each deposit must be differently distributed by the entangled currents, tidal and other, which wash the contorted shores; and this multiplication of results must manifestly be greatest where the complexity of the surface is greatest.

It is out of the question here to trace in detail the genesis of those endless complications described by Geology and Physical Geography: else we might show how the general truth, that every active force produces more than one change, is exemplified in the highly involved flow of the tides, in the ocean currents, in the winds, in the distribution of rain, in the distribution of heat, and so forth. But not to dwell upon these, let us, for the fuller elucidation of this truth in relation to the inorganic world, consider what would be the consequences of some extensive cosmical revolution — say the subsidence of Central America.

The immediate results of the disturbance would themselves be sufficiently complex. Besides the numberless dislocations of strata, the ejections of igneous matter, the propagation of earthquake vibrations thousands of miles around, the loud explosions, and the escape of gases; there would be the rush of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans to supply the vacant space, the subsequent recoil of enormous waves, which would traverse both these oceans and produce myriads of changes along their shores, the corresponding atmospheric waves complicated by the currents surrounding each volcanic vent, and the electrical discharges with which such disturbances are accompanied. But these temporary effects would be insignificant compared with the permanent ones. The complex currents of the Atlantic and Pacific would be altered in direction and amount. The distribution of heat achieved by these ocean currents would be different from what it is. The arrangement of the isothermal lines, not even on the neighbouring continents, but even throughout Europe would be changed. The tides would flow differently from what they do now. There would be more or less modification of the winds in their periods, strengths, directions, qualities. Rain would fall scarcely anywhere at the same times and in the same quantities as at present. In short, the meteorological conditions thousands of miles off, on all sides, would be more or less revolutionised.

Thus, without taking into account the infinitude of modifications which these changes of climate would produce upon the flora and fauna, both of land and sea, the reader will see the immense heterogeneity of the results wrought out by one force, when that force expends itself upon a previously complicated area; and he will readily draw the corollary that from the beginning the complication has advanced at an increasing rate.

Before going on to show how organic progress also depends upon the universal law that every force produces more than one change, we have to notice the manifestation of this law in yet another species of inorganic progress — namely, chemical. The same general causes that have wrought out the heterogeneity of the Earth, physically considered, have simultaneously wrought out its chemical heterogeneity. Without dwelling upon the general fact that the forces which have been increasing the variety and complexity of geological formations, have, at the same time, been bringing into contact elements not previously exposed to each other under conditions favourable to union, and so have been adding to the number of chemical compounds, let us pass to the more important complications that have resulted from the cooling of the Earth.

There is every reason to believe that at an extreme heat the elements cannot combine. Even under such heat as can be artificially produced, some very strong affinities yield, as for instance, that of oxygen for hydrogen; and the great majority of chemical compounds are decomposed at much lower temperatures. But without insisting upon the highly probable inference, that when the Earth was in its first state of incandescence there were no chemical combinations at all, it will suffice our purpose to point to the unquestionable fact that the compounds that can exist at the highest temperatures, and which must, therefore, have been the first that were formed as the Earth cooled, are those of the simplest constitutions. The protoxides — including under that head the alkalies, earths, etc. — are, as a

class, the most stable compounds we know: most of them resisting decomposition by any heat we can generate. These, consisting severally of one atom of each component element, are combinations of the simplest order — are but one degree less homogeneous than the elements themselves. More heterogeneous than these, less stable, and therefore later in the Earth's history, are the deutoxides, tritoxides, peroxides, etc.; in which two, three, four, or more atoms of oxygen are united with one atom of metal or other elements. Higher than these in heterogeneity are the hydrates; in which an oxide of hydrogen, united with an oxide of some other element, forms a substance whose atoms severally contain at least four ultimate atoms of three different kinds. Yet more heterogeneous and less stable still are the salts; which present us with compound atoms each made up of five, six, seven, eight, ten, twelve, or more atoms, of three, if not more, kinds. Then there are the hydrated salts, of a yet greater heterogeneity, which undergo partial decomposition at much lower temperatures. After them come the further-complicated supersalts and double salts, having a stability again decreased; and so throughout. Without entering into qualifications for which we lack space, we believe no chemist will deny it to be a general law of these inorganic combinations that, *other things equal*, the stability decreases as the complexity increases.

And then when we pass to the compounds of organic chemistry, we find this general law still further exemplified: we find much greater complexity and much less stability. An atom of albumen, for instance, consists of 482 ultimate atoms of five different kinds. Fibrine, still more intricate in constitution, contains in each atom, 298 atoms of carbon, 40 of nitrogen, 2 of sulphur, 228 of hydrogen, and 92 of oxygen — in all, 660 atoms; or, more strictly speaking — equivalents. And these two substances are so unstable as to decompose at quite ordinary temperatures; as that to which the outside of a joint of roast meat is exposed. Thus it is manifest that the present chemical

heterogeneity of the Earth's surface has arisen by degrees, as the decrease of heat has permitted; and that it has shown itself in three forms — first, in the multiplication of chemical compounds; second, in the greater number of different elements contained in the more modern of these compounds: and third, in the higher and more varied multiples in which these more numerous elements combine.

To say that this advance in chemical heterogeneity is due to the one cause, diminution of the Earth's temperature, would be to say too much; for it is clear that aqueous and atmospheric agencies have been concerned; and, further, that the affinities of the elements themselves are implied. The cause has all along been a composite one: the cooling of the Earth having been simply the most general of the concurrent causes, or assemblage of conditions. And here, indeed, it may be remarked that in the several classes of facts already dealt with (excepting, perhaps, the first), and still more in those with which we shall presently deal, the causes are more or less compound; as indeed are nearly all causes with which we are acquainted. Scarcely any change can with logical accuracy be wholly ascribed to one agency, to the neglect of the permanent or temporary conditions under which only this agency produces the change. But as it does not materially affect our argument, we prefer, for simplicity's sake, to use throughout the popular mode of expression.

Perhaps it will be further objected, that to assign loss of heat as the cause of any changes, is to attribute these changes not to a force, but to the absence of a force. And this is true. Strictly speaking, the changes should be attributed to those forces which come into action when the antagonist force is withdrawn. But though there is an inaccuracy in saying that the freezing of water is due to the loss of its heat, no practical error arises from it; nor will a parallel laxity of expression vitiate our statements respecting the multiplication of effects. Indeed, the objection serves but to draw attention to the fact, that not only does the

exertion of a force produce more than one change, but the withdrawal of a force produces more than one change. And this suggests that perhaps the most correct statement of our general principle would be its most abstract statement — every change is followed by more than one other change.

Returning to the thread of our exposition, we have next to trace out, in organic progress, this same all-pervading principle. And here, where the evolution of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous was first observed, the production of many changes by one cause is least easy to demonstrate. The development of a seed into a plant, or an ovum into an animal, is so gradual, while the forces which determine it are so involved, and at the same time so unobtrusive, that it is difficult to detect the multiplication of effects which is elsewhere so obvious. Nevertheless, guided by indirect evidence, we may pretty safely reach the conclusion that here too the law holds.

Observe, first, how numerous are the effects which any marked change works upon an adult organism — a human being, for instance. An alarming sound or sigh, besides the impressions on the organs of sense and the nerves, may produce a start, a scream, a distortion of the face, a trembling consequent upon a general muscular relaxation, a burst of perspiration, an excited action of the heart, a rush of blood to the brain, followed possibly by arrest of the heart's action and by syncope: and if the system be feeble, an indisposition with its long train of complicated symptoms may set in. Similarly in cases of disease. A minute portion of the small-pox virus introduced into the system, will, in a severe case, cause, during the first stage, rigors, heat of skin, accelerated pulse, furred tongue, loss of appetite, thirst, epigastric uneasiness, vomiting, headache, pains in the back and limbs, muscular weakness, convulsions, delirium, etc.; in the second stage, cutaneous eruption, itching, tingling, sore throat, swelled fauces, salivation, cough, hoarseness, dyspnœa, etc.; and in the third stage, œdematous inflammations, pneumonia,

pleurisy, diarrhœa, inflammation of the brain, ophthalmia, erysipelas, etc.; each of which enumerated symptoms is itself more or less complex. Medicines, special foods, better air, might in like manner be instanced as producing multiplied results.

Now it needs only to consider that the many changes thus wrought by one force upon an adult organism, will be in part paralleled in an embryo organism, to understand how here also, the evolution of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous may be due to the production of many effects by one cause. The external heat and other agencies which determine the first complications of the germ, may, by acting upon these, superinduce further complications; upon these still higher and more numerous ones; and so on continually: each organ as it is developed serving, by its actions and reactions upon the rest, to initiate new complexities. The first pulsations of the fœtal heart must simultaneously aid the unfolding of every part. The growth of each tissue, by taking from the blood special proportions of elements, must modify the constitution of the blood; and so must modify the nutrition of all the other tissues. The heart's action, implying as it does a certain waste, necessitates an addition to the blood of effete matters, which must influence the rest of the system, and perhaps, as some think, cause the formation of excretory organs. The nervous connections established among the viscera must further multiply their mutual influences: and so continually.

Still stronger becomes the probability of this view when we call to mind the fact, that the same germ may be evolved into different forms according to circumstances. Thus, during its earlier stages, every embryo is sexless — becomes either male or female as the balance of forces acting upon it determines. Again, it is a well-established fact that the larva of a working-bee will develop into a queen-bee, if, before it is too late, its food be changed to that on which the larvæ of queen-bees are fed. Even more remarkable is the case of certain entozoa. The

ovum of a tape-worm, getting into its natural habitat, the intestine, unfolds into the well-known form of its parent; but if carried, as it frequently is, into other parts of the system, it becomes a sac-like creature, called by naturalists the *Echinococcus* — a creature so extremely different from the tape-worm in aspect and structure, that only after careful investigations has it been proved to have the same origin. All which instances imply that each advance in embryonic complication results from the action of incident forces upon the complication previously existing.

Indeed, we may find *à priori* reason to think that the evolution proceeds after this manner. For since it is now known that no germ, animal or vegetable, contains the slightest rudiment, trace, or indication of the future organism — now that the microscope has shown us that the first process set up in every fertilised germ, is a process of repeated spontaneous fissions ending in the production of a mass of cells, not one of which exhibits any special character: there seems no alternative but to suppose that the partial organisation at any moment subsisting in a growing embryo, is transformed by the agencies acting upon it into the succeeding phase of organisation, and this into the next, until, through ever-increasing complexities, the ultimate form is reached. Thus, though the subtilty of the forces and the slowness of the results, prevent us from *directly* showing that the stages of increasing heterogeneity through which every embryo passes, severally arise from the production of many changes by one force, yet, *indirectly*, we have strong evidence that they do so. .

We have marked how multitudinous are the effects which one cause may generate in an adult organism; that a like multiplication of effects must happen in the unfolding organism, we have observed in sundry illustrative cases; further, it has been pointed out that the ability which like germs have to originate unlike forms, implies that the successive transformations result

from the new changes superinduced on previous changes; and we have seen that structureless as every germ originally is, the development of an organism out of it is otherwise incomprehensible. Not indeed that we can thus really explain the production of any plant or animal. We are still in the dark respecting those mysterious properties in virtue of which the germ, when subject to fit influences, undergoes the special changes that begin the series of transformations. All we aim to show, is, that given a germ possessing these mysterious properties, the evolution of an organism from it, probably depends upon that multiplication of effects which we have seen to be the cause of progress in general, so far as we have yet traced it.

When leaving the development of single plants and animals, we pass to that of the Earth's flora and fauna, the course of our argument again becomes clear and simple. Though, as was admitted in the first part of this article, the fragmentary facts Palæontology has accumulated, do not clearly warrant us in saying that, in the lapse of geologic time, there have been evolved more heterogeneous organisms, and more heterogeneous assemblages of organisms, yet we shall now see that there *must* ever have been a tendency towards these results. We shall find that the production of many effects by one cause, which, as already shown, has been all along increasing the physical heterogeneity of the Earth, has further involved an increasing heterogeneity in its flora and fauna, individually and collectively. An illustration will make this clear.

Suppose that by a series of upheavals, occurring, as they are now known to do, at long intervals, the East Indian Archipelago were to be, step by step, raised into a continent, and a chain of mountains formed along the axis of elevation. By the first of these upheavals, the plants and animals inhabiting Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea, and the rest, would be subjected to slightly modified sets of conditions. The climate in general would be altered in temperature, in humidity, and in its periodi-

cal variations; while the local differences would be multiplied. These modifications would affect, perhaps inappreciably, the entire flora and fauna of the region. The change of level would produce additional modifications: varying in different species, and also in different members of the same species, according to their distance from the axis of elevation. Plants, growing only on the sea-shore in special localities, might become extinct. Others, living only in swamps of a certain humidity, would, if they survived at all, probably undergo visible changes of appearance. While still greater alterations would occur in the plants gradually spreading over the lands newly raised above the sea. The animals and insects living on these modified plants, would themselves be in some degree modified by change of food, as well as by change of climate; and the modification would be more marked where, from the dwindling or disappearance of one kind of plant, an allied kind was eaten. In the lapse of the many generations arising before the next upheaval, the sensible or insensible alterations thus produced in each species would become organised — there would be a more or less complete adaptation to the new conditions. The next upheaval would superinduce further organic changes, implying wider divergences from the primary forms; and so repeatedly.

But now let it be observed that the revolution thus resulting would not be a substitution of a thousand more or less modified species for the thousand original species; but in place of the thousand original species there would arise several thousand species, or varieties, or changed forms. Each species being distributed over an area of some extent, and tending continually to colonise the new area exposed, its different members would be subject to different sets of changes. Plants and animals spreading towards the equator would not be affected in the same way with others spreading from it. Those spreading towards the new shores would undergo changes unlike the changes undergone by those spreading into the mountains. Thus, each original

race of organisms, would become the root from which diverged several races differing more or less from it and from each other; and while some of these might subsequently disappear, probably more than one would survive in the next geologic period: the very dispersion itself increasing the chances of survival. Not only would there be certain modifications thus caused by change of physical conditions and food, but also in some cases other modifications caused by change of habit. The fauna of each island, peopling, step by step, the newly-raised tracts, would eventually come in contact with the faunas of other islands; and some members of these other faunas would be unlike any creatures before seen. Herbivores meeting with new beasts of prey, would, in some cases, be led into modes of defence or escape differing from those previously used; and simultaneously the beasts of prey would modify their modes of pursuit and attack. We know that when circumstances demand it, such changes of habit *do* take place in animals; and we know that if the new habits become the dominant ones, they must eventually in some degree alter the organisation.

Observe, now, however, a further consequence. There must arise not simply a tendency towards the differentiation of each race of organisms into several races; but also a tendency to the occasional production of a somewhat higher organism. Taken in the mass, these divergent varieties which have been caused by fresh physical conditions and habits of life, will exhibit changes quite indefinite in kind and degree; and changes that do not necessarily constitute an advance. Probably in most cases the modified type will be neither more or less heterogeneous than the original one. In some cases the habits of life adopted being simpler than before, a less heterogeneous structure will result: there will be a retrogradation. But it *must* now and then occur, that some division of a species, falling into circumstances which give it rather more complex experiences, and demand actions somewhat more involved, will have certain of its organs further

differentiated in proportionately small degrees, — will become slightly more heterogeneous.

Thus, in the natural course of things, there will from time to time arise an increased heterogeneity both of the Earth's flora and fauna, and of individual races included in them. Omitting detailed explanations, and allowing for the qualifications which cannot here be specified, we think it is clear that geological mutations have all along tended to complicate the forms of life, whether regarded separately or collectively. The same causes which have led to the evolution of the Earth's crust from the simple into the complex, have simultaneously led to a parallel evolution of the Life upon its surface. In this case, as in previous ones, we see that the transformation of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous is consequent upon the universal principle, that every active force produces more than one change.

The deduction here drawn from the established truths of geology and the general laws of life, gains immensely in weight on finding it to be in harmony with an induction drawn from direct experience. Just that divergence of many races from one race, which we inferred must have been continually occurring during geologic time, we know to have occurred during the pre-historic and historic periods, in man and domestic animals. And just that multiplication of effects which we concluded must have produced the first, we see has produced the last. Single causes, as famine, pressure of population, war, have periodically led to further dispersions of mankind and of dependent creatures: each such dispersion initiating new modifications, new varieties of type. Whether all the human races be or be not derived from one stock, philology makes it clear that whole groups of races now easily distinguishable from each other, were originally one race, — that the diffusion of one race into different climates and conditions of existence, has produced many modified forms of it.

Similarly with domestic animals. Though in some cases — as that of dogs — community of origin will perhaps be disputed,

yet in other cases — as that of the sheep or the cattle of our own country — it will not be questioned that local differences of climate, food, and treatment, have transformed one original breed into numerous breeds now become so far distinct as to produce unstable hybrids. Moreover, through the complications of effects flowing from single causes, we here find, what we before inferred, not only an increase of general heterogeneity, but also of special heterogeneity. While of the divergent divisions and subdivisions of the human race, many have undergone changes not constituting an advance; while in some the type may have degraded; in others it has become decidedly more heterogeneous. The civilised European departs more widely from the vertebrate archetype than does the savage. Thus, both the law and the cause of progress, which, from lack of evidence, can be but hypothetically substantiated in respect of the earlier forms of life on our globe, can be actually substantiated in respect of the latest forms.

If the advance of Man towards greater heterogeneity is traceable to the production of many effects by one cause, still more clearly may the advance of Society towards greater heterogeneity be so explained. Consider the growth of an industrial organisation. When, as must occasionally happen, some individual of a tribe displays unusual aptitude for making an article of general use — a weapon, for instance — which was before made by each man for himself, there arises a tendency towards the differentiation of that individual into a maker of such weapon. His companions — warriors and hunters all of them, — severally feel the importance of having the best weapons that can be made; and are therefore certain to offer strong inducements to this skilled individual to make weapons for them. He, on the other hand, having not only an unusual faculty, but an unusual liking, for making such weapons (the talent and the desire for any occupation being commonly associated), is predisposed to fulfil these commissions on the offer

of an adequate reward: especially as his love of distinction is also gratified. This first specialisation of function, once commenced, tends ever to become more decided. On the side of the weapon-maker continued practice gives increased skill — increased superiority to his products: on the side of his clients, cessation of practice entails decreased skill. Thus the influences that determine this division of labour grow stronger in both ways; and the incipient heterogeneity is, on the average of cases, likely to become permanent for that generation, if no longer.

Observe now, however, that this process not only differentiates the social mass into two parts, the one monopolising, or almost monopolising, the performance of a certain function, and the other having lost the habit, and in some measure the power, of performing that function; but it tends to imitate other differentiations. The advance we have described implies the introduction of barter, — the maker of weapons has, on each occasion, to be paid in such other articles as he agrees to take in exchange. But he will not habitually take in exchange one kind of article, but many kinds. He does not want mats only, or skins, or fishing gear, but he wants all these; and on each occasion will bargain for the particular things he most needs. What follows? If among the members of the tribe there exist any slight differences of skill in the manufacture of these various things, as there are almost sure to do, the weapon-maker will take from each one the thing which that one excels in making: he will exchange for mats with him whose mats are superior, and will bargain for the fishing gear of whoever has the best. But he who has bartered away his mats or his fishing gear, must make other mats or fishing gear for himself; and in so doing must, in some degree, further develop his aptitude. Thus it results that the small specialities of faculty possessed by various members of the tribe, will tend to grow more decided. If such transactions are from time to time repeated, these specialisations may become appreciable. And whether or not there ensue distinct differentiations of

other individuals into makers of particular articles, it is clear that incipient differentiations take place throughout the tribe: the one original cause produces not only the first dual effect, but a number of secondary dual effects, like in kind, but minor in degree. This process, of which traces may be seen among groups of schoolboys, cannot well produce any lasting effects in an unsettled tribe; but where there grows up a fixed and multiplying community, these differentiations become permanent, and increase with each generation. A larger population, involving a greater demand for every commodity, intensifies the functional activity of each specialised person or class; and this renders the specialisation more definite where it already exists, and establishes it where it is nascent. By increasing the pressure on the means of subsistence, a larger population again augments these results; seeing that each person is forced more and more to confine himself to that which he can do best, and by which he can gain most. This industrial progress, by aiding future production, opens the way for a further growth of population, which reacts as before: in all which the multiplication of effects is manifest. Presently, under these same stimuli, new occupations arise. Competing workers, ever aiming to produce improved articles, occasionally discover better processes or raw materials. In weapons and cutting tools, the substitution of bronze for stone entails upon him who first makes it a great increase of demand — so great an increase that he presently finds all his time occupied in making the bronze for the articles he sells, and is obliged to depute the fashioning of these to others: and, eventually, the making of bronze, thus gradually differentiated from a pre-existing occupation, becomes an occupation by itself.

But now mark the ramified changes which follow this change. Bronze soon replaces stone, not only in the articles it was first used for, but in many others — in arms, tools, and utensils of various kinds; and so affects the manufacture of these things.

Further, it affects the processes which these utensils subserve, and the resulting products — modifies buildings, carvings, dress, personal decorations. Yet again, it sets going sundry manufactures which were before impossible, from lack of a material fit for the requisite tools. And all these changes react on the people — increase their manipulative skill, their intelligence, their comfort, — refine their habits and tastes. Thus the evolution of a homogeneous society into a heterogeneous one, is clearly consequent on the general principle, that many effects are produced by one cause.

Our limits will not allow us to follow out this process in its higher complications: else might we show how the localisation of special industries in special parts of a kingdom, as well as the minute subdivision of labour in the making of each commodity, are similarly determined. Or, turning to a somewhat different order of illustrations, we might dwell on the multitudinous changes — material, intellectual, moral — caused by printing; or the further extensive series of changes wrought by gunpowder. But leaving the intermediate phases of social development, let us take a few illustrations from its most recent and its passing phases. To trace the effects of steam-power, in its manifold applications to mining, navigation, and manufactures of all kinds, would carry us into unmanageable detail. Let us confine ourselves to the latest embodiment of steam-power — the locomotive engine.

This, as the proximate cause of our railway system, has changed the face of the country, the course of trade, and the habits of the people. Consider, first, the complicated sets of changes that precede the making of every railway — the provisional arrangements, the meetings, the registration, the trial section, the parliamentary survey, the lithographed plans, the books of reference, the local deposits and notices, the application to Parliament, the passing Standing-Orders Committee, the first, second, and third readings: each of which brief heads indicates

a multiplicity of transactions, and the development of sundry occupations — as those of engineers, surveyors, lithographers, parliamentary agents, share-brokers; and the creation of sundry others — as those of traffic-takers, reference-takers. Consider, next, the yet more marked changes implied in railway construction — the cuttings, embankings, tunnellings, diversions of roads; the building of bridges, and stations; the laying down of ballast, sleepers, and rails; the making of engines, tenders, carriages, and waggons: which processes, acting upon numerous trades, increase the importation of timber, the quarrying of stone, the manufacture of iron, the mining of coal, the burning of bricks: institute a variety of special manufactures weekly advertised in the *Railway Times;* and, finally, open the way to sundry new occupations, as those of drivers, stokers, cleaners, plate-layers, etc., etc. And then consider the changes, more numerous and involved still, which railways in action produce on the community at large. The organisation of every business is more or less modified: ease of communication makes it better to do directly what was before done by proxy; agencies are established where previously they would not have paid; goods are obtained from remote wholesale houses instead of near retail ones; and commodities are used which distance once rendered inaccessible. Again, the rapidity and small cost of carriage tend to specialise more than ever the industries of different districts — to confine each manufacture to the parts in which, from local advantages, it can be best carried on. Further, the diminished cost of carriage, facilitating distribution, equalises prices, and also, on the average, lowers prices: thus bringing divers articles within the means of those before unable to buy them, and so increasing their comforts and improving their habits. At the same time the practice of travelling is immensely extended. Classes who never before thought of it, take annual trips to the sea; visit their distant relations; make tours; and so we are benefited in body, feelings, and intellect. Moreover, the more

prompt transmission of letters and of news produces further changes — makes the pulse of the nation faster. Yet more, there arises a wide dissemination of cheap literature through railway book-stalls, and of advertisements in railway carriages: both of them aiding ulterior progress.

And all the innumerable changes here briefly indicated are consequent on the invention of the locomotive engine. The social organism has been rendered more heterogeneous in virtue of the many new occupations introduced, and the many old ones further specialised; prices in every place have been altered; each trader has, more or less, modified his way of doing business; and almost every person has been affected in his actions, thoughts, emotions.

Illustrations to the same effect might be indefinitely accumulated. That every influence brought to bear upon society works multiplied effects; and that increase of heterogeneity is due to this multiplication of effects; may be seen in the history of every trade, every custom, every belief. But it is needless to give additional evidence of this. The only further fact demanding notice, is, that we here see still more clearly than ever, the truth before pointed out, that in proportion as the area on which any force expends itself becomes heterogeneous, the results are in a yet higher degree multiplied in number and kind. While among the primitive tribes to whom it was first known, caoutchouc caused but a few changes, among ourselves the changes have been so many and varied that the history of them occupies a volume.[1] Upon the small, homogeneous community inhabiting one of the Hebrides, the electric telegraph would produce, were it used, scarcely any results; but in England the results it produces are multitudinous. The comparatively simple organisation under which our ancestors lived five centuries ago, could have undergone but few modifications from an event like

[1] *Personal Narrative of the Origin of the Caoutchouc, or India-Rubber Manufacture in England.* By Thomas Hancock.

the recent one at Canton; but now the legislative decision respecting it sets up many hundreds of complex modifications, each of which will be the parent of numerous future ones.

Space permitting, we could willingly have pursued the argument in relation to all the subtler results of civilisation. As before, we showed that the law of Progress to which the organic and inorganic worlds conform, is also conformed to by Language, Sculpture, Music, etc.; so might we here show that the cause which we have hitherto found to determine Progress holds in these cases also. We might demonstrate in detail how, in Science, an advance of one division presently advances other divisions — how Astronomy has been immensely forwarded by discoveries in Optics, while other optical discoveries have initiated Microscopic Anatomy, and greatly aided the growth of Physiology — how Chemistry has indirectly increased our knowledge of Electricity, Magnetism, Biology, Geology — how Electricity has reacted on Chemistry and Magnetism, developed our views of Light and Heat, and disclosed sundry laws of nervous action.

In Literature the same truth might be exhibited in the manifold effects of the primitive mystery-play, not only as originating the modern drama, but as affecting through it other kinds of poetry and fiction; or in the still multiplying forms of periodical literature that have descended from the first newspaper, and which have severally acted and reacted on other forms of literature and on each other. The influence which a new school of Painting — as that of the pre-Raffaelites — exercises upon other schools; the hints which all kinds of pictorial art are deriving from Photography; the complex results of new critical doctrines, as those of Mr. Ruskin, might severally be dwelt upon as displaying the like multiplication of effects. But it would needlessly tax the reader's patience to pursue, in their many ramifications, these various changes: here become so involved and subtle as to be followed with some difficulty.

Without further evidence, we venture to think our case is made out. The imperfections of statement which brevity has necessitated, do not, we believe, militate against the propositions laid down. The qualifications here and there demanded would not, if made, affect the inferences. Though in one instance, where sufficient evidence is not attainable, we have been unable to show that the law of Progress applies; yet there is high probability that the same generalisation holds which holds throughout the rest of creation. Though, in tracing the genesis of Progress, we have frequently spoken of complex causes as if they were simple ones; it still remains true that such causes are far less complex than their results. Detailed criticisms cannot affect our main position. Endless facts go to show that every kind of progress is from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous; and that it is so because each change is followed by many changes. And it is significant that where the facts are most accessible and abundant, there are these truths most manifest.

However, to avoid committing ourselves to more than is yet proved, we must be content with saying that such are the law and the cause of all progress that is known to us. Should the Nebular Hypothesis ever be established, then it will become manifest that the Universe at large, like every organism, was once homogeneous; that as a whole, and in every detail, it has unceasingly advanced towards greater heterogeneity; and that its heterogeneity is still increasing. It will be seen that as in each event of to-day, so from the beginning, the decomposition of every expended force into several forces has been perpetually producing a higher complication; that the increase of heterogeneity so brought about is still going on, and must continue to go on; and that thus Progress is not an accident, not a thing within human control, but a beneficent necessity.

A few words must be added on the ontological bearings of our argument. Probably not a few will conclude that here is an attempted solution of the great questions with which Philos-

ophy in all ages has perplexed itself. Let none thus deceive themselves. Only such as know not the scope and the limits of Science can fall into so grave an error. The foregoing generalisations apply, not to the genesis of things in themselves, but to their genesis as manifested to the human consciousness. After all that has been said, the ultimate mystery remains just as it was. The explanation of that which is explicable, does but bring out into greater clearness the inexplicableness of that which remains behind. However we may succeed in reducing the equation to its lowest terms, we are not thereby enabled to determine the unknown quantity: on the contrary, it only becomes more manifest that the unknown quantity can never be found.

Little as it seems to do so, fearless inquiry tends continually to give a firmer basis to all true Religion. The timid sectarian, alarmed at the progress of knowledge, obliged to abandon one by one the superstitions of his ancestors, and daily finding his cherished beliefs more and more shaken, secretly fears that all things may some day be explained; and has a corresponding dread of Science: thus evincing the profoundest of all infidelity — the fear lest the truth be bad. On the other hand, the sincere man of science, content to follow wherever the evidence leads him, becomes by each new inquiry more profoundly convinced that the Universe is an insoluble problem. Alike in the external and the internal worlds, he sees himself in the midst of perpetual changes, of which he can discover neither the beginning nor the end. If, tracing back the evolution of things, he allows himself to entertain the hypothesis that all matter once existed in a diffused form, he finds it utterly impossible to conceive how this came to be so; and equally, if he speculates on the future, he can assign no limit to the grand succession of phenomena ever unfolding themselves before him. On the other hand, if he looks inward, he perceives that both terminations of the thread of consciousness are beyond his grasp: he

cannot remember when or how consciousness commenced, and he cannot examine the consciousness that at any moment exists; for only a state of consciousness that is already past can become the object of thought, and never one which is passing.

When, again, he turns from the succession of phenomena, external or internal, to their essential nature, he is equally at fault. Though he may succeed in resolving all properties of objects into manifestations of force, he is not thereby enabled to realise what force is; but finds, on the contrary, that the more he thinks about it, the more he is baffled. Similarly, though analysis of mental actions may finally bring him down to sensations as the original materials out of which all thought is woven, he is none the forwarder; for he cannot in the least comprehend sensation — cannot even conceive how sensation is possible. Inward and outward things he thus discovers to be alike inscrutable in their ultimate genesis and nature. He sees that the Materialist and Spiritualist controversy is a mere war of words; the disputants being equally absurd — each believing he understands that which it is impossible for any man to understand. In all directions his investigations eventually bring him face to face with the unknowable; and he ever more clearly perceives it to be the unknowable. He learns at once the greatness and the littleness of human intellect — its power in dealing with all that comes within the range of experience; its impotence in dealing with all that transcends experience. He feels, with a vividness which no others can, the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact, considered in itself. He alone truly *sees* that absolute knowledge is impossible. He alone *knows* that under all things there lies an impenetrable mystery.

A LIBERAL EDUCATION; AND WHERE TO FIND IT

Thomas Henry Huxley

(1825–1895)

[A splendid fighter, the champion against all comers of Darwin's theory of evolution and of the needs and methods of scientific instruction, Thomas Henry Huxley won, on the lecture platform and in the militant philosophic essay, victories so brilliant as to obscure even his fame as a biological investigator. Probably no other English scientist of the first rank, not merely of the Victorian age but of any age, has achieved such a high and enduring place as a man of letters. And surely when we consider the vast range of his activities — as investigator, teacher, public lecturer, writer, and member of various commissions — no great scientist has more justly deserved the title of a citizen of the world.

A Liberal Education (1868) is one of those vigorous essays which gained the cause of scientific instruction and, within a brief half century, shifted the emphasis (at least in America) from classical to scientific studies. In fact, so complete has been the change that to us, in our century, parts of the essay have lost their local or temporary interest, and the tone of Huxley the reformer may seem a bit too strident. In other parts, striving for lucidity and directness (and in these qualities he has hardly been surpassed in English prose) Huxley the scientific expositor may leave the vertebration of the larger structure of his essay somewhat too apparent. But in such passages as the description of man's contest with the unseen player, "that calm strong angel who is playing for man's life and [who] would rather lose than win," Huxley the true literary artist touches the chords of truth till they become vibrant, and stirs the reader's imagination no less by sound and rhythm than by his vivid picturing.

For a defense of *classical* studies, see Arnold's *Literature and Science* (*Discourses in America*, 1885).]

The business which the South London Working Men's College has undertaken is a great work; indeed, I might say, that Education, with which that college proposes to grapple, is the

greatest work of all those which lie ready to a man's hand just at present.

And, at length, this fact is becoming generally recognized. You cannot go anywhere without hearing a buzz of more or less confused and contradictory talk on this subject — nor can you fail to notice that, in one point at any rate, there is a very decided advance upon like discussions in former days. Nobody outside the agricultural interest now dares to say that education is a bad thing. If any representative of the once large and powerful party, which, in former days, proclaimed this opinion, still exists in a semi-fossil state, he keeps his thoughts to himself. In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost distressing in their harmony, raised in favour of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated.

The politicians tell us, "you must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for education, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines, cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us. And a few voices are lifted up in favour of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now, as ever it was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.

These members of the minority, with whom I confess I have a good deal of sympathy, are doubtful whether any of the other reasons urged in favour of the education of the people are of much value — whether, indeed, some of them are based upon either wise or noble grounds of action. They question if it be wise to tell people that you will do for them, out of fear of their

power, what you have left undone, so long as your only motive was compassion for their weakness and their sorrows. And if ignorance of everything which it is needful a ruler should know is likely to do so much harm in the governing classes of the future, why is it, they ask reasonably enough, that such ignorance in the governing classes of the past has not been viewed with equal horror?

Compare the average artisan and the average country squire, and it may be doubted if you will find a pin to choose between the two in point of ignorance, class feeling, or prejudice. It is true that the ignorance is of a different sort — that the class feeling is in favour of a different class — and that the prejudice has a distinct savour of wrong-headedness in each case — but it is questionable if the one is either a bit better, or a bit worse, than the other. The old protectionist theory is the doctrine of trades unions as applied by the squires, and the modern trades unionism is the doctrine of the squires applied by the artisans. Why should we be worse off under one *régime* than under the other?

Again, this sceptical minority asks the clergy to think whether it is really want of education which keeps the masses away from their ministrations — whether the most completely educated men are not as open to reproach on this score as the workmen; and whether, perchance, this may not indicate that it is not education which lies at the bottom of the matter?

Once more, these people, whom there is no pleasing, venture to doubt whether the glory, which rests upon being able to undersell all the rest of the world, is a very safe kind of glory — whether we may not purchase it too dear; especially if we allow education which ought to be directed to the making of men, to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical industry, but good for nothing else.

And, finally, these people inquire whether it is the masses

alone who need a reformed and improved education. They ask whether the richest of our public schools might not well be made to supply knowledge, as well as gentlemanly habits, a strong class feeling, and eminent proficiency in cricket. They seem to think that the noble foundations of our old universities are hardly fulfilling their functions in their present posture of half-clerical seminaries, half racecourses, where men are trained to win a senior wranglership, or a double-first, as horses are trained to win a cup, with as little reference to the needs of after-life in the case of the man as in that of the racer. And while as zealous for education as the rest, they affirm that if the education of the richer classes were such as to fit them to be the leaders and the governors of the poorer; and if the education of the poorer classes were such as to enable them to appreciate really wise guidance and good governance, the politicians need not fear mob-law, nor the clergy lament their want of flocks, nor the capitalists prognosticate the annihilation of the prosperity of the country.

Such is the diversity of opinion upon the why and the wherefore of education. And my hearers will be prepared to expect that the practical recommendations which are put forward are not less discordant. There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the course of next session if there were the least probability that half a dozen leading statesmen of different parties would agree what that education should be.

Some hold that education without theology is worse than none. Others maintain, quite as strongly, that education with theology is in the same predicament. But this is certain, that those who hold the first opinion can by no means agree what theology should be taught; and that those who maintain the second are in a small minority.

At any rate "make people learn to read, write, and cipher," say a great many; and the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far as it goes. But, as has happened to me in former days, those who, in despair of getting anything better, advocate this measure, are met with the objection that it is very like making a child practise the use of a knife, fork, and spoon, without giving it a particle of meat. I really don't know what reply is to be made to such an objection.

But it would be unprofitable to spend more time in disentangling, or rather in showing up the knots in, the ravelled skeins of our neighbours. Much more to the purpose is it to ask if we possess any clue of our own which may guide us among these entanglements. And by way of a beginning, let us ask ourselves — What is education? Above all things, what is our ideal of a thoroughly liberal education? — of that education which, if we could begin life again, we would give ourselves — of that education which, if we could mould the fates to our own will, we would give our children? Well, I know not what may be your conceptions upon this matter, but I will tell you mine, and I hope I shall find that our views are not very discrepant.

Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game at chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit, and a keen eye for all the means of giving and getting out of check? Do you not think that we should look with a disapprobation amounting to scorn, upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet, it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less, of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing

something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well, the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated — without haste, but without remorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retzsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel who is playing for love, as we say, and would rather lose than win — and I should accept it as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by Education is learning the rules of this mighty game. In other words, education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority or of numbers upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strictness, there is no such thing as an uneducated man. Take an extreme case. Suppose that an adult man, in the full vigour of his faculties, could be suddenly placed in the world, as Adam is said to have

been, and then left to do as he best might. How long would he be left uneducated? Not five minutes. Nature would begin to teach him, through the eye, the ear, the touch, the properties of objects. Pain and pleasure would be at his elbow telling him to do this and avoid that; and by slow degrees the man would receive an education which, if narrow, would be thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys and woes, compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors, pleasure and pain; but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions; or, in other words, by the laws of the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past, for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members — nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honours in nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll," who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are

plucked; and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience — incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education — that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as artificial education — is to make good these defects in nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal education is an artificial education — which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant

of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter.

Where is such an education as this to be had? Where is there any approximation to it? Has any one tried to found such an education? Looking over the length and breadth of these islands, I am afraid that all these questions must receive a negative answer. Consider our primary schools and what is taught in them. A child learns: —

1. To read, write, and cipher, more or less well; but in a very large proportion of cases not so well as to take pleasure in reading, or to be able to write the commonest letter properly.

2. A quantity of dogmatic theology, of which the child, nine times out of ten, understands next to nothing.

3. Mixed up with this, so as to seem to stand or fall with it, a few of the broadest and simplest principles of morality. This is, to my mind, much as if a man of science should make the story of the fall of the apple in Newton's garden an integral part of the doctrine of gravitation, and teach it as of equal authority with the law of the inverse squares.

4. A good deal of Jewish history and Syrian geography, and perhaps a little something about English history and the geography of the child's own country. But I doubt if there is a primary school in England in which hangs a map of the hundred in which the village lies, so that the children may be practically taught by it what a map means.

5. A certain amount of regularity, attentive obedience, respect for others: obtained by fear, if the master be incompetent or foolish; by love and reverence, if he be wise.

So far as this school course embraces a training in the theory and practice of obedience to the moral laws of nature, I gladly admit, not only that it contains a valuable educational element, but that, so far, it deals with the most valuable and important part of all education. Yet, contrast what is done in this direction with what might be done; with the time given to matters of comparatively no importance; with the absence of any attention to things of the highest moment; and one is tempted to think of Falstaff's bill and "the halfpenny worth of bread to all that quantity of sack."

Let us consider what a child thus "educated" knows, and what it does not know. Begin with the most important topic of all --- morality, as the guide of conduct. The child knows well enough that some acts meet with approbation and some with disapprobation. But it has never heard that there lies in the nature of things a reason for every moral law, as cogent and as well defined as that which underlies every physical law; that stealing and lying are just as certain to be followed by evil consequences as putting your hand in the fire, or jumping out of a garret window. Again, though the scholar may have been made acquainted, in dogmatic fashion, with the broad laws of morality, he has had no training in the application of those laws to the difficult problems which result from the complex conditions of modern civilisation. Would it not be very hard to expect any one to solve a problem in conic sections who had merely been taught the axioms and definitions of mathematical science?

A workman has to bear hard labour, and perhaps privation, while he sees others rolling in wealth, and feeding their dogs with what would keep his children from starvation. Would it not be well to have helped that man to calm the natural promptings of discontent by showing him, in his youth, the necessary connection of the moral law which prohibits stealing with the stability of society — by proving to him, once for all, that it is better

for his own people, better for himself, better for future generations, that he should starve than steal? If you have no foundation of knowledge or habit of thought to work upon, what chance have you of persuading a hungry man that a capitalist is not a thief "with a circumbendibus?" And if he honestly believes that of what avail is it to quote the commandment against stealing when he proposes to make the capitalist disgorge?

Again, the child learns absolutely nothing of the history or the political organisation of his own country. His general impression is, that everything of much importance happened a very long while ago; and that the Queen and the gentlefolks govern the country much after the fashion of King David and the elders and nobles of Israel — his sole models. Will you give a man with this much information a vote? In easy times he sells it for a pot of beer. Why should he not? It is of about as much use to him as a chignon, and he knows as much what to do with it, for any other purpose. In bad times, on the contrary, he applies his simple theory of government, and believes that his rulers are the cause of his sufferings — a belief which sometimes bears remarkable practical fruits.

Least of all, does the child gather from this primary "education" of ours a conception of the laws of the physical world, or of the relations of cause and effect therein. And this is the more to be lamented, as the poor are especially exposed to physical evils, and are more interested in removing them than any other class of the community. If any one is concerned in knowing the ordinary laws of mechanics one would think it is the hand-labourer, whose daily toil lies among levers and pulleys; or among the other implements of artisan work. And if any one is interested in the laws of health, it is the poor man, whose strength is wasted by ill-prepared food, whose health is sapped by bad ventilation and bad drainage, and half whose children are massacred by disorders which might be prevented. Not only does our present primary education carefully abstain from hint-

ing to the poor man that some of his greatest evils are traceable to mere physical agencies, which could be removed by energy, patience, and frugality; but it does worse — it renders him, so far as it can, deaf to those who could help him, and tries to substitute an Oriental submission to what is falsely declared to be the will of God, for his natural tendency to strive after a better condition.

What wonder then if very recently an appeal has been made to statistics for the profoundly foolish purpose of showing that education is of no good — that it diminishes neither misery nor crime among the masses of mankind? I reply, why should the thing which has been called education do either the one or the other? If I am a knave or a fool, teaching me to read and write won't make me less of either one or the other — unless somebody shows me how to put my reading and writing to wise and good purposes.

Suppose any one were to argue that medicine is of no use, because it could be proved statistically that the percentage of deaths was just the same among people who had been taught how to open a medicine chest and among those who did not so much as know the key by sight. The argument is absurd; but it is not more preposterous than that against which I am contending. The only medicine for suffering, crime, and all the other woes of mankind, is wisdom. Teach a man to read and write, and you have put into his hands the great keys of the wisdom box. But it is quite another matter whether he ever opens the box or not. And he is as likely to poison as to cure himself, if, without guidance, he swallows the first drug that comes to hand. In these times a man may as well be purblind, as unable to read — lame, as unable to write. But I protest that if I thought the alternative were a necessary one, I would rather that the children of the poor should grow up ignorant of both these mighty arts, than that they should remain ignorant of that knowledge to which these arts are means.

It may be said that all these animadversions may apply to primary schools, but that the higher schools, at any rate, must be allowed to give a liberal education. In fact, they professedly sacrifice everything else to this object.

Let us inquire into this matter. What do the higher schools, those to which the great middle class of the country sends its children, teach, over and above the instruction given in the primary schools? There is a little more reading and writing of English. But, for all that, every one knows that it is a rare thing to find a boy of the middle or upper classes who can read aloud decently, or who can put his thoughts on paper in clear and grammatical (to say nothing of good or elegant) language. The "ciphering" of the lower schools expands into elementary mathematics in the higher; into arithmetic, with a little algebra, a little Euclid. But I doubt if one boy in five hundred has ever heard the explanation of a rule of arithmetic, or knows his Euclid otherwise than by rote.

Of theology, the middle-class schoolboy gets rather less than poorer children, less absolutely and less relatively, because there are so many other claims upon his attention. I venture to say that, in the great majority of cases, his ideas on this subject when he leaves school are of the most shadowy and vague description, and associated with painful impressions of the weary hours spent in learning collects and catechism by heart.

Modern geography, modern history, modern literature; the English language as a language; the whole circle of the sciences, physical, moral, and social, are even more completely ignored in the higher than in the lower schools. Up till within a few years back, a boy might have passed through any one of the great public schools with the greatest distinction and credit, and might never so much as have heard of one of the subjects I have just mentioned. He might never have heard that the earth goes round the sun; that England underwent a great revolution in 1688, and France another in 1789; that there once

lived certain notable men called Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Voltaire, Goethe, Schiller. The first might be a German and the last an Englishman for anything he could tell you to the contrary. And as for Science, the only idea the word would suggest to his mind would be dexterity in boxing.

I have said that this was the state of things a few years back, for the sake of the few righteous who are to be found among the educational cities of the plain. But I would not have you too sanguine about the result, if you sound the minds of the existing generation of public school-boys on such topics as those I have mentioned.

Now let us pause to consider this wonderful state of affairs; for the time will come when Englishmen will quote it as the stock example of the stolid stupidity of their ancestors in the nineteenth century. The most thoroughly commercial people, the greatest voluntary wanderers and colonists the world has ever seen, are precisely the middle classes of this country. If there be a people which has been busy making history on the great scale for the last three hundred years — and the most profoundly interesting history — history which, if it happened to be that of Greece or Rome, we should study with avidity — it is the English. If there be a people which, during the same period, has developed a remarkable literature, it is our own. If there be a nation whose prosperity depends absolutely and wholly upon their mastery over the forces of nature, upon their intelligent apprehension of, and obedience to the laws of the creation and distribution of wealth, and of the stable equilibrium of the forces of society, it is precisely this nation. And yet this is what these wonderful people tell their sons: — "At the cost of from one to two thousand pounds of our hard-earned money we devote twelve of the most precious years of your lives to school. There you shall toil, or be supposed to toil; but there you shall not learn one single thing of all those you will most want to know directly you leave school and enter upon the

practical business of life. You will in all probability go into business, but you shall not know where or how any article of commerce is produced, or the difference between an export or an import, or the meaning of the word "capital." You will very likely settle in a colony, but you shall not know whether Tasmania is part of New South Wales, or *vice versâ*.

"Very probably you may become a manufacturer, but you shall not be provided with the means of understanding the working of one of your own steam-engines, or the nature of the raw products you employ; and when you are asked to buy a patent you shall not have the slightest means of judging whether the inventor is an imposter who is contravening the elementary principles of science, or a man who will make you as rich as Crœsus.

"You will very likely get into the House of Commons. You will have to take your share in making laws which may prove a blessing or a curse to millions of men. But you shall not hear one word respecting the political organisation of your country; the meaning of the controversy between freetraders and protectionists shall never have been mentioned to you; you shall not so much as know that there are such things as economical laws.

"The mental power which will be of most importance in your daily life will be the power of seeing things as they are without regard to authority; and of drawing accurate general conclusions from particular facts. But at school and at college you shall know of no source of truth but authority; nor exercise your reasoning faculty upon anything but deduction from that which is laid down by authority.

"You will have to weary your soul with work, and many a time eat your bread in sorrow and in bitterness, and you shall not have learned to take refuge in the great source of pleasure without alloy, the serene resting-place for worn human nature — the world of art."

Said I not rightly that we are a wonderful people? I am

quite prepared to allow, that education entirely devoted to these omitted subjects might not be a completely liberal education. But is an education which ignores them all a liberal education? Nay, is it too much to say that the education which should embrace these subjects and no others would be a real education, though an incomplete one; while an education which omits them is really not an education at all, but a more or less useful course of intellectual gymnastics?

For what does the middle-class school put in the place of all these things which are left out? It substitutes what is usually comprised under the compendious title of the "classics" — that is to say, the languages, the literature, and the history of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and the geography of so much of the world as was known to these two great nations of antiquity. Now, do not expect me to depreciate the earnest and enlightened pursuit of classical learning. I have not the least desire to speak ill of such occupations, nor any sympathy with those who run them down. On the contrary, if my opportunities had lain in that direction, there is no investigation into which I could have thrown myself with greater delight than that of antiquity.

What science can present greater attractions than philology? How can a lover of literary excellence fail to rejoice in the ancient masterpieces? And with what consistency could I, whose business lies so much in the attempt to decipher the past, and to build up intelligible forms out of the scattered fragments of long-extinct beings, fail to take a sympathetic, though an unlearned, interest in the labours of a Niebuhr, a Gibbon, or a Grote? Classical history is a great section of the palæontology of man; and I have the same double respect for it as for other kinds of palæontology — that is to say, a respect for the facts which it establishes as for all facts, and a still greater respect for it as a preparation for the discovery of a law of progress.

But if the classics were taught as they might be taught — if

boys and girls were instructed in Greek and Latin, not merely as languages, but as illustrations of philological science; if a vivid picture of life on the shores of the Mediterranean two thousand years ago were imprinted on the minds of scholars; if ancient history were taught, not as a weary series of feuds and fights, but traced to its causes in such men placed under such conditions; if, lastly, the study of the classical books were followed in such a manner as to impress boys with their beauties, and with the grand simplicity of their statement of the everlasting problems of human life, instead of with their verbal and grammatical peculiarities; I still think it as little proper that they should form the basis of a liberal education for our contemporaries, as I should think it fitting to make that sort of palæontology with which I am familiar the back-bone of modern education.

It is wonderful how close a parallel to classical training could be made out of that palæontology to which I refer. In the first place I could get up an osteological primer so arid, so pedantic in its terminology, so altogether distasteful to the youthful mind, as to beat the recent famous production of the head-masters out of the field in all these excellences. Next, I could exercise my boys upon easy fossils, and bring out all their powers of memory and all their ingenuity in the application of my osteo-grammatical rules to the interpretation, or construing, of those fragments. To those who had reached the higher classes, I might supply odd bones to be built up into animals, giving great honour and reward to him who succeeded in fabricating monsters most entirely in accordance with the rules. That would answer to verse-making and essay-writing in the dead languages.

To be sure, if a great comparative anatomist were to look at these fabrications he might shake his head, or laugh. But what then? Would such a catastrophe destroy the parallel? What, think you, would Cicero, or Horace, say to the production of the best sixth form going? And would not Terence stop his ears

and run out if he could be present at an English performance of his own plays? Would Hamlet, in the mouths of a set of French actors, who should insist on pronouncing English after the fashion of their own tongue, be more hideously ridiculous?

But it will be said that I am forgetting the beauty, and the human interest, which appertain to classical studies. To this I reply that it is only a very strong man who can appreciate the charms of a landscape as he is toiling up a steep hill, along a bad road. What with short-windedness, stones, ruts, and a pervading sense of the wisdom of rest and be thankful, most of us have little enough sense of the beautiful under these circumstances. The ordinary school-boy is precisely in this case. He finds Parnassus uncommonly steep, and there is no chance of his having much time or inclination to look about him till he gets to the top. And nine times out of ten he does not get to the top.

But if this be a fair picture of the results of classical teaching at its best — and I gather from those who have authority to speak on such matters that it is so — what is to be said of classical teaching at its worst, or in other words, of the classics of our ordinary middle-class schools?[1] I will tell you. It means getting up endless forms and rules by heart. It means turning Latin and Greek into English, for the mere sake of being able to do it, and without the smallest regard to the worth, or worthlessness, of the author read. It means the learning of innumerable, not always decent, fables in such a shape that the meaning they once had is dried up into utter trash; and the only impression left upon a boy's mind is, that the people who believed such things must have been the greatest idiots the world ever saw. And it means, finally, that after a dozen years spent at this kind of work, the sufferer shall be incompetent to interpret a passage in an author he has not already got up; that he shall loathe the sight of a Greek or Latin book; and that

[1] For a justification of what is here said about these schools, see that valuable book, "Essays on a Liberal Education," *passim*.

he shall never open, or think of, a classical writer again, until, wonderful to relate, he insists upon submitting his sons to the same process.

These be your gods, O Israel! For the sake of this net result (and respectability) the British father denies his children all the knowledge they might turn to account in life, not merely for the achievement of vulgar success, but for guidance in the great crises of human existence. This is the stone he offers to those whom he is bound by the strongest and tenderest ties to feed with bread.

If primary and secondary education are in this unsatisfactory state, what is to be said to the universities? This is an awful subject, and one I almost fear to touch with my unhallowed hands; but I can tell you what those say who have authority to speak.

The Rector of Lincoln College, in his lately published valuable "Suggestions for Academical Organisation with especial reference to Oxford," tells us: —

"The colleges were, in their origin, endowments, not for the elements of a general liberal education, but for the prolonged study of special and professional faculties by men of riper age. The universities embraced both these objects. The colleges, while they incidentally aided in elementary education, were specially devoted to the highest learning. . . .

"This was the theory of the middle-age university and the design of collegiate foundations in their origin. Time and circumstances have brought about a total change. The colleges no longer promote the researches of science, or direct professional study. Here and there college walls may shelter an occasional student, but not in larger proportions than may be found in private life. Elementary teaching of youths under twenty is now the only function performed by the university, and almost the only object of college endowments. Colleges

were homes for the life-study of the highest and most abstruse parts of knowledge. They have become boarding schools in which the elements of the learned languages are taught to youths." (P. 127.)

If Mr. Pattison's high position, and his obvious love and respect for his university, be insufficient to convince the outside world that language so severe is yet no more than just, the authority of the Commissioners who reported on the University of Oxford in 1850 is open to no challenge. Yet they write: —

"It is generally acknowledged that both Oxford and the country at large suffer greatly from the absence of a body of learned men devoting their lives to the cultivation of science, and to the direction of academical education.

"The fact that so few books of profound research emanate from the University of Oxford, materially impairs its character as a seat of learning, and consequently its hold on the respect of the nation."

Cambridge can claim no exemption from the reproaches addressed to Oxford. And thus there seems no escape from the admission that what we fondly call our great seats of learning are simply "boarding schools" for bigger boys; that learned men are not more numerous in them than out of them; that the advancement of knowledge is not the object of fellows of colleges; that, in the philosophic calm and meditative stillness of their greenswarded courts philosophy does not thrive, and meditation bears few fruits.

It is my good fortune to reckon amongst my friends resident members of both universities, who are men of learning and research, zealous cultivators of science, keeping before their minds a noble ideal of a university, and doing their best to make that ideal a reality; and, to me, they would necessarily typify the universities, did not the authoritative statements I have quoted compel me to believe that they are exceptional, and not representative men. Indeed, upon calm consideration,

several circumstances lead me to think that the Rector of Lincoln College and the Commissioners cannot be far wrong.

I believe there can be no doubt that the foreigner who should wish to become acquainted with the scientific, or the literary, activity of modern England, would simply lose his time and his pains if he visited our universities with that object.

And, as for works of profound research on any subject, and, above all, in that classical lore for which the universities profess to sacrifice almost everything else, why, a third-rate, poverty-stricken German university turns out more produce of that kind in one year than our vast and wealthy foundations elaborate in ten.

Ask any man who is investigating any question, profoundly and thoroughly — be it historical, philosophical, philological, physical, literary, or theological; who is trying to make himself master of any abstract subject (except, perhaps, political economy and geology, both of which are intensely Anglican sciences), whether he is not compelled to read half a dozen times as many German as English books? And whether, of these English books, more than one in ten is the work of a fellow of a college, or a professor of an English university?

Is this from any lack of power in the English as compared with the German mind? The countrymen of Grote and of Mill, of Faraday, of Robert Brown, of Lyell, and of Darwin, to go no further back than the contemporaries of men of middle age, can afford to smile at such a suggestion. England can show now, as she has been able to show in every generation since civilisation spread over the West, individual men who hold their own against the world, and keep alive the old tradition of her intellectual eminence.

But, in the majority of cases, these men are what they are in virtue of their native intellectual force, and of a strength of character which will not recognise impediments. They are not trained in the courts of the Temple of Science, but storm the walls

of that edifice in all sorts of irregular ways, and with much loss of time and power, in order to obtain their legitimate positions.

Our universities not only do not encourage such men; do not offer them positions in which it should be their highest duty to do thoroughly that which they are most capable of doing; but, as far as possible, university training shuts out of the minds of those among them, who are subjected to it, the prospect that there is anything in the world for which they are specially fitted. Imagine the success of the attempt to still the intellectual hunger of any of the men I have mentioned, by putting before him, as the object of existence, the successful mimicry of the measure of a Greek song, or the roll of Ciceronian prose. Imagine how much success would be likely to attend the attempt to persuade such men that the education which leads to perfection in such elegances is alone to be called culture, while the facts of history, the process of thought, the conditions of moral and social existence, and the laws of physical nature are left to be dealt with as they may by outside barbarians!

It is not thus that the German universities, from being beneath notice a century ago, have become what they are now — the most intensely cultivated and the most productive intellectual corporations the world has ever seen.

The student who repairs to them sees in the list of classes and of professors a fair picture of the world of knowledge. Whatever he needs to know there is some one ready to teach him, some one competent to discipline him in the way of learning; whatever his special bent, let him but be able and diligent, and in due time he shall find distinction and a career. Among his professors he sees men whose names are known and revered throughout the civilised world; and their living example infects him with a noble ambition, and a love for the spirit of work.

The Germans dominate the intellectual world by virtue of the same simple secret as that which made Napoleon the master of old Europe. They have declared *la carrière ouverte aux*

talents, and every Bursch marches with a professor's gown in his knapsack. Let him become a great scholar, or man of science, and ministers will compete for his services. In Germany they do not leave the chance of his holding the office he would render illustrious to the tender mercies of a hot canvass, and the final wisdom of a mob of country parsons.

In short, in Germany, the universities are exactly what the Rector of Lincoln and the Commissioners tell us the English universities are not; that is to say, corporations "of learned men devoting their lives to the cultivation of science, and the direction of academical education." They are not "boarding schools for youths," nor clerical seminaries; but institutions for the higher culture of men, in which the theological faculty is of no more importance or prominence than the rest; and which are truly "universities," since they strive to represent and embody the totality of human knowledge, and to find room for all forms of intellectual activity.

May zealous and clear-headed reformers like Mr. Pattison succeed in their noble endeavours to shape our universities towards some such ideal as this, without losing what is valuable and distinctive in their social tone! But until they have succeeded, a liberal education will be no more obtainable in our Oxford and Cambridge Universities than in our public schools.

If I am justified in my conception of the ideal of a liberal education; and if what I have said about the existing educational institutions of the country is also true, it is clear that the two have no sort of relation to one another; that the best of our schools and the most complete of our university trainings give but a narrow, one-sided, and essentially illiberal education — while the worst give what is really next to no education at all. The South London Working-Men's College could not copy any of these institutions if it would; I am bold enough to express the conviction that it ought not if it could.

For what is wanted is the reality and not the mere name of

a liberal education; and this college must steadily set before itself the ambition to be able to give that education sooner or later. At present we are but beginning, sharpening our educational tools, as it were, and, except a modicum of physical science, we are not able to offer much more than is to be found in an ordinary school.

Moral and social science — one of the greatest and most fruitful of our future classes, I hope — at present lacks only one thing in our programme, and that is a teacher. A considerable want, no doubt; but it must be recollected that it is much better to want a teacher than to want the desire to learn.

Further, we need what, for want of a better name, I must call Physical Geography. What I mean is that which the Germans call *Erdkunde*. It is a description of the earth, of its place and relation to other bodies; of its general structure, and of its great features — winds, tides, mountains, plains; of the chief forms of the vegetable and animal worlds, of the varieties of man. It is the peg upon which the greatest quantity of useful and entertaining scientific information can be suspended.

Literature is not upon the College programme; but I hope some day to see it there. For literature is the greatest of all sources of refined pleasure, and one of the great uses of a liberal education is to enable us to enjoy that pleasure. There is scope enough for the purposes of liberal education in the study of the rich treasures of our own language alone. All that is needed is direction, and the cultivation of a refined taste by attention to sound criticism. But there is no reason why French and German should not be mastered sufficiently to read what is worth reading in those languages with pleasure and with profit.

And finally, by and by, we must have History; treated not as a succession of battles and dynasties; not as a series of biographies; not as evidence that Providence has always been on the side of either Whigs or Tories; but as the development of man in times past, and in other conditions than our own.

But, as it is one of the principles of our College to be self-supporting, the public must lead, and we must follow, in these matters. If my hearers take to heart what I have said about liberal education, they will desire these things, and I doubt not we shall be able to supply them. But we must wait till the demand is made.

ATHENIAN AND AMERICAN LIFE[1]

John Fiske

(1842–1901)

[John Fiske, a New Englander by birth and a lifelong resident of Cambridge, Massachusetts, was not only a prolific and popular writer of American history, but also a distinguished and influential lecturer and essayist on philosophical, scientific, and religious subjects. He had been precocious as a boy, and became a man of vigorous scholarship and forceful personality. A sturdy disciple of Darwin and Spencer, he applied himself earnestly to the task of spreading in America a knowledge of their theories, and also made contributions of his own to the evolutionary doctrine. He was a fluent, tireless writer, with a lively relish for the picturesque and the dramatic in history, and possessed the faculty of presenting difficult subjects in such a simple manner as to attract and hold the desultory reader.

The essay here given, though written in 1873, at a time when the author was immersed in the ambitious undertaking of his *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, and more than a decade before he began to issue his most enduring work, the series of histories, is thoroughly representative of his easy, animated, and unpretentious style. The contrast that he draws between the healthy calm and grace of Athenian life and the nervous hurry and imperfection of American life, is in line with the kind of criticism that Arnold, Carlyle, and Ruskin were bringing to bear on modern tendencies. But Fiske has none of the fine scorn or fiery indignation that kept the pages of his English contemporaries in a glow of irony, pleading, and malediction. He is content to present plainly and unemotionally a test whereby "our contemporary civilization will appear seriously defective," and to conclude with an optimistic hope that the Athenian ideal may yet be recovered and the "era of exorbitant industrialism" have an end.]

In a very interesting essay on British and Foreign Characteristics, published a few years ago, Mr. W. R. Greg quotes the

[1] From *The Unseen World and Other Essays*. Copyright 1876 by John Fiske; 1904 by Abby M. Fiske. By arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

famous letter of the Turkish cadi to Mr. Layard, with the comment that "it contains the germ and element of a wisdom to which our busy and bustling existence is a stranger"; and he uses it as a text for an instructive sermon on the "gospel of leisure." He urges, with justice, that the too eager and restless modern man, absorbed in problems of industrial development, may learn a wholesome lesson from the contemplation of his Oriental brother, who cares not to say, "Behold, this star spinneth round that star, and this other star with a tail cometh and goeth in so many years"; who aspires not after a "double stomach," nor hopes to attain to Paradise by "seeking with his eyes." If any one may be thought to stand in need of some such lesson, it is the American of to-day. Just as far as the Turk carries his apathy to excess, does the American carry to excess his restlessness. But just because the incurious idleness of the Turk is excessive, so as to be detrimental to completeness of living, it is unfit to supply us with the hints we need concerning the causes, character, and effects of our over-activity. A sermon of leisure, if it is to be of practical use to us, must not be a sermon of laziness. The Oriental state of mind is incompatible with progressive improvement of any sort, physical, intellectual, or moral. It is one of the phenomena attendant upon the arrival of a community at a stationary condition before it has acquired a complex civilization. And it appears serviceable rather as a background upon which to exhibit in relief our modern turmoil, than by reason of any lesson which it is itself likely to convey. Let us in preference study one of the most eminently progressive of all the communities that have existed. Let us take an example quite different from any that can be drawn from Oriental life, but almost equally contrasted with any that can be found among ourselves; and let us, with the aid of it, examine the respective effects of leisure and of hurry upon the culture of the community.

What do modern critics mean by the "healthy completeness"

of ancient life, which they are so fond of contrasting with the "heated," "discontented," or imperfect and one-sided existence of modern communities? Is this a mere set of phrases, suited to some imaginary want of the literary critic, but answering to nothing real? Are they to be summarily disposed of as resting upon some tacit assumption of that old-grannyism which delights in asseverating that times are not what they used to be? Is the contrast an imaginary one, due to the softened, cheerful light with which we are wont to contemplate classic antiquity through the charmed medium of its incomparable literature? Or is it a real contrast, worthy of the attention and analysis of the historical inquirer? The answer to these queries will lead us far into the discussion of the subject which we have propounded, and we shall best reach it by considering some aspects of the social condition of ancient Greece. The lessons to be learned from that wonderful country are not yet exhausted. Each time that we return to that richest of historic mines, and delve faithfully and carefully, we shall be sure to dig up some jewel worth carrying away.

And in considering ancient Greece, we shall do well to confine our attention, for the sake of definiteness of conception, to a single city. Comparatively homogeneous as Greek civilization was, there was nevertheless a great deal of difference between the social circumstances of sundry of its civic communities. What was true of Athens was frequently not true of Sparta or Thebes, and general assertions about ancient Greece are often likely to be correct only in a loose and general way. In speaking, therefore, of Greece, I must be understood in the main as referring to Athens, the eye and light of Greece, the nucleus and centre of Hellenic culture.

Let us note first that Athens was a large city surrounded by pleasant village-suburbs, — the *demes* of Attika, — very much as Boston is closely girdled by rural places like Brookline, Jamaica Plain, and the rest, village after village rather thickly

covering a circuit of from ten to twenty miles' radius. The population of Athens with its suburbs may perhaps have exceeded half a million; but the number of adult freemen bearing arms did not exceed twenty-five thousand.[1] For every one of these freemen there were four or five slaves; not ignorant, degraded labourers, belonging to an inferior type of humanity, and bearing the marks of a lower caste in their very personal formation and in the colour of their skin, like our lately-enslaved negroes; but intelligent, skilled labourers, belonging usually to the Hellenic, and at any rate to the Aryan race, as fair and perhaps as handsome as their masters, and not subjected to especial ignominy or hardship. These slaves, of whom there were at least one hundred thousand adult males, relieved the twenty-five thousand freemen of nearly all the severe drudgery of life; and the result was an amount of leisure perhaps never since known on an equal scale in history.

The relations of master and slave in ancient Athens constituted, of course, a very different phenomenon from anything which the history of our own Southern States has to offer us. Our Southern slaveholders lived in an age of industrial development; they were money-makers; they had their full share of business in managing the operations for which their labourers supplied the crude physical force. It was not so in Athens. The era of civilization founded upon organized industry had not begun; money-making had not come to be, with the Greeks, the one all-important end of life; and mere subsistence, which is now difficult, was then easy. The Athenian lived in a mild, genial, healthy climate, in a country which has always been notable for the activity and longevity of its inhabitants. He was frugal in his habits, — a wine-drinker and an eater of meat, but rarely addicted to gluttony or intemperance. His dress was inexpensive, for the Greek climate made but little protection necessary, and the gymnastic habits of the Greeks led them to

[1] See Herod. V. 97; Aristoph. Ekkl. 432; Thukyd. II. 13; Plutarch, Perikl. 37.

esteem more highly the beauty of the body than that of its covering. His house was simple, not being intended for social purposes, while of what we should call home-life the Greeks had none. The house was a shelter at night, a place where the frugal meal might be taken, a place where the wife might stay, and look after the household slaves or attend to the children. And this brings us to another notable feature of Athenian life. The wife having no position in society, being nothing, indeed, but a sort of household utensil, how greatly was life simplified! What a door for expenditure was there, as yet securely closed, and which no one had thought of opening! No milliner's or dressmaker's bills, no evening parties, no Protean fashions, no elegant furniture, no imperious necessity for Kleanthes to outshine Kleon, no coaches, no *Château Margaux*, no journeys to Arkadia in the summer! In such a state of society, as one may easily see, the labour of one man would support half a dozen. It cost the Athenian but a few cents daily to live, and even these few cents might be earned by his slaves. We need not, therefore, be surprised to learn that in ancient Athens there were no paupers or beggars. There might be poverty, but indigence was unknown; and because of the absence of fashion, style, and display, even poverty entailed no uncomfortable loss of social position. The Athenians valued wealth highly, no doubt, as a source of contributions to public festivals and to the necessities of the state. But as far as the circumstances of daily life go, the difference between the rich man and the poor man was immeasurably less than in any modern community, and the incentives to the acquirement of wealth were, as a consequence, comparatively slight.

I do not mean to say that the Athenians did not engage in business. Their city was a commercial city, and their ships covered the Mediterranean. They had agencies and factories at Marseilles, on the remote coasts of Spain, and along the shores of the Black Sea. They were in many respects the greatest

commercial people of antiquity, and doubtless knew, as well as other people, the keen delights of acquisition. But my point is, that with them the acquiring of property had not become the chief or only end of life. Production was carried on almost entirely by slave-labour; interchange of commodities was the business of the masters, and commerce was in those days simple. Banks, insurance companies, brokers' boards, — all these complex instruments of Mammon were as yet unthought of. There was no Wall Street in ancient Athens; there were no great failures, no commercial panics, no over-issues of stock. Commerce, in short, was a quite subordinate matter, and the art of money-making was in its infancy.

The twenty-five thousand Athenian freemen thus enjoyed, on the whole, more undisturbed leisure, more freedom from petty harassing cares, than any other community known to history. Nowhere else can we find, on careful study, so little of the hurry and anxiety which destroys the even tenour of modern life, — nowhere else so few of the circumstances which tend to make men insane, inebriate, or phthisical, or prematurely old.

This being granted, it remains only to state and illustrate the obverse fact. It is not only true that Athens has produced and educated a relatively larger number of men of the highest calibre and most complete culture than any other community of like dimensions which has ever existed; but it is also true that there has been no other community, of which the members have, as a general rule, been so highly cultivated, or have attained individually such completeness of life. In proof of the first assertion it will be enough to mention such names as those of Solon, Themistokles, Perikles, and Demosthenes; Isokrates and Lysias; Aristophanes and Menander; Aischylos, Sophokles, and Euripides; Pheidias and Praxiteles; Sokrates and Plato; Thukydides and Xenophon: remembering that these men distinguished in such different kinds of achievement, but like each other in consummateness of culture, were all produced

within one town in the course of three centuries. At no other time and place in human history has there been even an approach to such a fact as this.

My other assertion, about the general culture of the community in which such men were reared, will need a more detailed explanation. When I say that the Athenian public was, on the whole, the most highly cultivated public that has ever existed, I refer of course to something more than what is now known as literary culture. Of this there was relatively little in the days of Athenian greatness; and this was because there was not yet need for it or room for it. Greece did not until a later time begin to produce scholars and *savants;* for the function of scholarship does not begin until there has been an accumulation of bygone literature to be interpreted for the benefit of those who live in a later time. Grecian greatness was already becoming a thing of the past, when scholarship and literary culture of the modern type began at Rome and Alexandria. The culture of the ancient Athenians was largely derived from direct intercourse with facts of nature and of life, and with the thoughts of rich and powerful minds orally expressed. The value of this must not be underrated. We moderns are accustomed to get so large a portion of our knowledge and of our theories of life out of books, our taste and judgment are so largely educated by intercourse with the printed page, that we are apt to confound culture with book-knowledge; we are apt to forget the innumerable ways in which the highest intellectual faculties may be disciplined without the aid of literature. We must study antiquity to realize how thoroughly this could be done. But even in our day how much more fruitful is the direct influence of an original mind over us, in the rare cases when it can be enjoyed, than any indirect influence which the same mind may exert through the medium of printed books! What fellow of a college, placed amid the most abundant and efficient implements of study, ever gets

such a stimulus to the highest and richest intellectual life as was afforded to Eckermann by his daily intercourse with Goethe? The breadth of culture and the perfection of training exhibited by John Stuart Mill need not surprise us when we recollect that his earlier days were spent in the society of James Mill and Jeremy Bentham. And the remarkable extent of view, the command of facts, and the astonishing productiveness of such modern Frenchmen as Sainte-Beuve and Littré become explicable when we reflect upon the circumstance that so many able and brilliant men are collected in one city, where their minds may continually and directly react upon each other. It is from the lack of such personal stimulus that it is difficult or indeed wellnigh impossible, even for those whose resources are such as to give them an extensive command of books, to keep up to the highest level of contemporary culture while living in a village or provincial town. And it is mainly because of the personal stimulus which it affords to its students, that a great university, as a seat of culture, is immeasurably superior to a small one.

Nevertheless, the small community in any age possesses one signal advantage over the large one, in its greater simplicity of life and its consequent relative leisure. It was the prerogative of ancient Athens that it united the advantages of the large to those of the small community. In relative simplicity of life it was not unlike the modern village, while at the same time it was the metropolis where the foremost minds of the time were enabled to react directly upon one another. In yet another respect these opposite advantages were combined. The twenty-five thousand free inhabitants might perhaps all know something of each other. In this respect Athens was doubtless much like a New England country town, with the all-important difference that the sordid tone due to continual struggle for money was absent. It was like the small town in the chance which it afforded for publicity and community of pursuits among

its inhabitants. Continuous and unrestrained social intercourse was accordingly a distinctive feature of Athenian life. And, as already hinted, this intercourse did not consist in evening flirtations, with the eating of indigestible food at unseasonable hours, and the dancing of "the German." It was carried on out-of-doors in the brightest sunlight; it brooked no effeminacy; its amusements were athletic games, or dramatic entertainments, such as have hardly since been equalled. Its arena was a town whose streets were filled with statues and adorned with buildings, merely to behold which was an education. The participators in it were not men with minds so dwarfed by exclusive devotion to special pursuits that after "talking shop" they could find nothing else save wine and cookery to converse about. They were men with minds fresh and open for the discussion of topics which are not for a day only.

A man like Sokrates, living in such a community, did not need to write down his wisdom. He had no such vast public as the modern philosopher has to reach. He could hail any one he happened to pass in the street, begin an argument with him forthwith, and set a whole crowd thinking and inquiring about subjects the mere contemplation of which would raise them for the moment above matters of transient concern. For more than half a century any citizen might have gratis the benefit of oral instruction from such a man as he. And I sometimes think, by the way, that — curtailed as it is to literary proportions in the dialogues of Plato, bereft of all that personal potency which it had when it flowed, instinct with earnestness, from the lips of the teacher — even to this day the wit of man has perhaps devised no better general gymnastics for the understanding than the Sokratic dialectic. I am far from saying that all Athens listened to Sokrates or understood him: had it been so, the caricature of Aristophanes would have been pointless, and the sublime yet mournful trilogy of dialogues which portray the closing scenes of the greatest life of antiquity would never

have been written. But the mere fact that such a man lived and taught in the way that he did goes far in proof of the deep culture of the Athenian public. Further confirmation is to be found in the fact that such tragedies as the Antigone, the Oidipous, and the Prometheus were written to suit the popular taste of the time; not to be read by literary people, or to be performed before select audiences such as in our day listen to Ristori or Janauschek, but to hold spell-bound that vast concourse of all kinds of people which assembled at the Dionysiac festivals.

Still further proof is furnished by the exquisite literary perfection of Greek writings. One of the common arguments in favour of the study of Greek at the present day is based upon the opinion that in the best works extant in that language the art of literary expression has reached wellnigh absolute perfection. I fully concur in this opinion, so far as to doubt if even the greatest modern writers, even a Pascal or a Voltaire, can fairly sustain a comparison with such Athenians as Plato or Lysias. This excellence of the ancient books is in part immediately due to the fact that they were not written in a hurry, or amid the anxieties of an over-busy existence; but it is in greater part due to the indirect consequences of a leisurely life. These books were written for a public which knew well how to appreciate the finer beauties of expression; and, what is still more to the point, their authors lived in a community where an elegant style was habitual. Before a matchless style can be written, there must be a good style "in the air," as the French say. Probably the most finished talking and writing of modern times has been done in and about the French court in the seventeenth century; and it is accordingly there that we find men like Pascal and Bossuet writing a prose which for precision, purity, and dignity has never since been surpassed. It is thus that the unapproachable literary excellence of ancient Greek books speaks for the genuine culture of the people who were expected to read them, or to hear them read. For one of the

surest indices of true culture, whether professedly literary or not, is the power to express one's self in precise, rhythmical, and dignified language. We hardly need a better evidence than this of the superiority of the ancient community in the general elevation of its tastes and perceptions. Recollecting how Herodotus read his history at the Olympic games, let us try to imagine even so picturesque a writer as Mr. Parkman reading a few chapters of his "Jesuits in North America" before the spectators assembled at the Jerome Park races, and we shall the better realize how deep-seated was Hellenic culture.

As yet, however, I have referred to but one side of Athenian life. Though "seekers after wisdom," the cultivated people of Athens did not spend all their valuable leisure in dialectics or in connoisseurship. They were not a set of *dilettanti* or dreamy philosophers, and they were far from subordinating the material side of life to the intellectual. Also, though they dealt not in money-making after the eager fashion of modern men, they had still concerns of immediate practical interest with which to busy themselves. Each one of these twenty-five thousand free Athenians was not only a free voter, but an office-holder, a legislator, a judge. They did not control the government through a representative body, but they were themselves the government. They were, one and all, in turn liable to be called upon to make laws, and to execute them after they were made, as well as to administer justice in civil and criminal suits. The affairs and interests, not only of their own city, but of a score or two of scattered dependencies, were more or less closely to be looked after by them. It lay with them to declare war, to carry it on after declaring it, and to pay the expenses of it. Actually and not by deputy they administered the government of their own city, both in its local and in its imperial relations. All this implies a more thorough, more constant, and more vital political training than that which is implied by the modern duties of casting a ballot and serving on a jury.

The life of the Athenian was emphatically a political life. From early manhood onward, it was part of his duty to hear legal questions argued by powerful advocates, and to utter a decision upon law and fact; or to mix in debate upon questions of public policy, arguing, listening, and pondering. It is customary to compare the political talent of the Greeks unfavourably with that displayed by the Romans, and I have no wish to dispute this estimate. But on a careful study it will appear that the Athenians, at least, in a higher degree than any other community of ancient times, exhibited parliamentary tact, or the ability to sit still while both sides of a question are getting discussed,— that sort of political talent for which the English races are distinguished, and to the lack of which so many of the political failures of the French are egregiously due. One would suppose that a judicature of the whole town would be likely to execute a sorry parody of justice; yet justice was by no means ill-administered at Athens. Even the most unfortunate and disgraceful scenes, — as where the proposed massacre of the Mytilenaians was discussed, and where summary retribution was dealt out to the generals who had neglected their duty at Arginusai, — even these scenes furnish, when thoroughly examined, as by Mr. Grote, only the more convincing proof that the Athenian was usually swayed by sound reason and good sense to an extraordinary degree. All great points, in fact, were settled rather by sober appeals to reason than by intrigue or lobbying; and one cannot help thinking that an Athenian of the time of Perikles would have regarded with pitying contempt the trick of the "previous question." And this explains the undoubted pre-eminence of Athenian oratory. This accounts for the fact that we find in the forensic annals of a single city, and within the compass of a single century, such names as Lysias, Isokrates, Andokides, Hypereides, Aischines, and Demosthenes. The art of oratory, like the art of sculpture, shone forth more brilliantly then than ever since, because then

the conditions favouring its development were more perfectly combined than they have since been. Now, a condition of society in which the multitude can always be made to stand quietly and listen to a logical discourse is a condition of high culture. Readers of Xenophon's Anabasis will remember the frequency of the speeches in that charming book. Whenever some terrible emergency arose, or some alarming quarrel or disheartening panic occurred, in the course of the retreat of the Ten Thousand, an oration from one of the commanders — not a demagogue's appeal to the lower passions, but a calm exposition of circumstances addressed to the sober judgment — usually sufficed to set all things in order. To my mind this is one of the most impressive historical lessons conveyed in Xenophon's book. And this peculiar kind of self-control, indicative of intellectual sobriety and high moral training, which was more or less characteristic of all Greeks, was especially characteristic of the Athenians.

These illustrations will, I hope, suffice to show that there is nothing extravagant in the high estimate which I have made of Athenian culture. I have barely indicated the causes of this singular perfection of individual training in the social circumstances amid which the Athenians lived. I have alleged it as an instance of what may be accomplished by a well-directed leisure, and in the absence or very scanty development of such a complex industrial life as that which surrounds us to-day. But I have not quite done with the Athenians. Before leaving this part of the subject, I must mention one further circumstance which tends to make ancient life appear in our eyes more sunny and healthy, and less distressed, than the life of modern times. And in this instance, too, though we are not dealing with any immediate or remote effects of leisureliness, we still have to note the peculiar advantage gained by the absence of a great complexity of interests in the ancient community.

With respect to religion, the Athenians were peculiarly

situated. They had for the most part outgrown the primitive terrorism of fetishistic belief. Save in cases of public distress, as in the mutilation of the Hermai, or in the refusal of Nikias to retreat from Syracuse because of an eclipse of the moon, they were no longer, like savages, afraid of the dark. Their keen æsthetic sense had prevailed to turn horrors of a primeval nature-worship into beauties. Their springs and groves were peopled by their fancy with naiads and dryads, not with trolls and grotesque goblins. Their feelings toward the unseen powers at work about them were in the main pleasant; as witness the little story about Pheidippides meeting the god Pan as he was making with hot haste toward Sparta to announce the arrival of the Persians. Now, while this original source of mental discomfort, which afflicts the uncivilized man, had ceased materially to affect the Athenians, they on the other hand lived at a time when the vague sense of sin and self-reproof which was characteristic of the early ages of Christianity, had not yet invaded society. The vast complication of life brought about by the extension of the Roman Empire led to a great development of human sympathies, unknown in earlier times, and called forth unquiet yearnings, desire for amelioration, a sense of shortcoming, and a morbid self-consciousness. It is accordingly under Roman sway that we first come across characters approximating to the modern type, like Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. It is then that we find the idea of social progress first clearly expressed, that we discover some glimmerings of a conscious philanthropy, and that we detect the earliest symptoms of that unhealthy tendency to subordinate too entirely the physical to the moral life, which reached its culmination in the Middle Ages. In the palmy days of the Athenians it was different. When we hint that they were not consciously philanthropists, we do not mean that they were not humane; when we accredit them with no idea of progress, we do not forget how much they did to render both the idea and the reality

possible; when we say that they had not a distressing sense of spiritual unworthiness, we do not mean that they had no conscience. We mean that their moral and religious life sat easily on them, like their own graceful drapery, — did not gall and worry them, like the haircloth garment of the monk. They were free from that dark conception of a devil which lent terror to life in the Middle Ages; and the morbid self-consciousness which led mediæval women to immure themselves in convents would have been to an Athenian quite inexplicable. They had, in short, an open and childlike conception of religion; and, as such, it was a sunny conception. Any one who will take the trouble to compare an idyl of Theokritos with a modern pastoral, or the poem of Kleanthes with a modern hymn, or the Aphrodite of Melos with a modern Madonna, will realize most effectually what I mean.

And, finally, the religion of the Athenians was in the main symbolized in a fluctuating mythology, and had never been hardened into dogmas. The Athenian was subject to no priest, nor was he obliged to pin his faith to any formulated creed. His hospitable polytheism left little room for theological persecution, and none for any heresy short of virtual atheism. The feverish doubts which rack the modern mind left him undisturbed. Though he might sink to any depth of scepticism in philosophy, yet the eternal welfare of his soul was not supposed to hang upon the issue of his doubts. Accordingly Athenian society was not only characterized in the main by freedom of opinion, in spite of the exceptional cases of Anaxagoras and Sokrates; but there was also none of that Gothic gloom with which the deepseated Christian sense of infinite responsibility for opinion has saddened modern religious life.

In these reflections I have wandered a little way from my principal theme, in order more fully to show why the old Greek life impresses me as so cheerful. Returning now to the keynote with which we started, let us state succinctly the net result of

what has been said about the Athenians. As a people we have seen that they enjoyed an unparalleled amount of leisure, living through life with but little turmoil and clatter. Their life was more spontaneous and unrestrained, less rigorously marked out by uncontrollable circumstances, than the life of moderns. They did not run so much in grooves. And along with this we have seen reason to believe that they were the most profoundly cultivated of all peoples; that a larger proportion of men lived complete, well-rounded, harmonious lives in ancient Athens than in any other known community. Keen, nimble-minded, and self-possessed; audacious speculators, but temperate and averse to extravagance; emotionally healthy, and endowed with an unequalled sense of beauty and propriety; how admirable and wonderful they seem when looked at across the gulf of ages intervening, — and what a priceless possession to humanity, of what noble augury for the distant future, is the fact that such a society has once existed!

The lesson to be drawn from the study of this antique life will impress itself more deeply upon us after we have briefly contemplated the striking contrast to it which is afforded by the phase of civilization amid which we live to-day. Ever since Greek civilization was merged in Roman imperialism, there has been a slowly growing tendency toward complexity of social life, — toward the widening of sympathies, the multiplying of interests, the increase of the number of things to be done. Through the later Middle Ages, after Roman civilization had absorbed and disciplined the incoming barbarism which had threatened to destroy it, there was a steadily increasing complication of society, a multiplication of the wants of life, and a consequent enhancement of the difficulty of self-maintenance. The ultimate causes of this phenomenon lie so far beneath the surface that they could be satisfactorily discussed only in a technical essay on the evolution of society. It will be enough for us here to observe that the great geographical discoveries of the

sixteenth century and the somewhat later achievements of physical science have, during the past two hundred years, aided powerfully in determining the entrance of the Western world upon an industrial epoch, — an epoch which has for its final object the complete subjection of the powers of nature to purposes of individual comfort and happiness. We have now to trace some of the effects of this lately-begun industrial development upon social life and individual culture. And as we studied the leisureliness of antiquity where its effects were most conspicuous, in the city of Athens, we shall now do well to study the opposite characteristics of modern society where they are most conspicuously exemplified, in our own country. The attributes of American life which it will be necessary to signalize will be seen to be only the attributes of modern life in their most exaggerated phase.

To begin with, in studying the United States, we are no longer dealing with a single city, or with small groups of cities. The city as a political unit, in the antique sense, has never existed among us, and indeed can hardly be said now to exist anywhere. The modern city is hardly more than a great emporium of trade, or a place where large numbers of people find it convenient to live huddled together; not a sacred fatherland to which its inhabitants owe their highest allegiance, and by the requirements of which their political activity is limited. What strikes us here is that our modern life is diffused or spread out, not concentrated like the ancient civic life. If the Athenian had been the member of an integral community, comprising all peninsular Greece and the mainland of Asia Minor, he could not have taken life so easily as he did.

Now our country is not only a very large one, but compared to its vast territorial extent it contains a very small population. If we go on increasing at the present rate, so that a century hence we number four or five hundred millions, our country will be hardly more crowded than China is to-day. Or if our whole population were now to be brought east of Niagara Falls, and

confined on the south by the Potomac, we should still have as much elbow-room as they have in France. Political economists can show the effects of this high ratio of land to inhabitants, in increasing wages, raising the interest of money, and stimulating production. We are thus living amid circumstances which are goading the industrial activity characteristic of the last two centuries, and notably of the English race, into an almost feverish energy. The vast extent of our unwrought territory is constantly draining fresh life from our older districts, to aid in the establishment of new frontier communities of a somewhat lower or less highly organized type. And these younger communities, daily springing up, are constantly striving to take on the higher structure, — to become as highly civilized and to enjoy as many of the prerogatives of civilization as the rest. All this calls forth an enormous quantity of activity, and causes American life to assume the aspect of a life-and-death struggle for mastery over the material forces of that part of the earth's surface upon which it thrives.

It is thus that we are traversing what may properly be called the *barbarous* epoch of our history, — the epoch at which the predominant intellectual activity is employed in achievements which are mainly of a material character. Military barbarism, or the inability of communities to live together without frequent warfare, has been nearly outgrown by the whole Western world. Private wars, long since made everywhere illegal, have nearly ceased; and public wars, once continual, have become infrequent. But industrial barbarism, by which I mean inability of a community to direct a portion of its time to purposes of spiritual life, after providing for its physical maintenance, — this kind of barbarism the modern world has by no means outgrown. To-day, the great work of life is to live; while the amount of labour consumed in living has throughout the present century been rapidly increasing. Nearly the whole of this American community toils from youth to old age in merely pro-

curing the means for satisfying the transient wants of life. Our time and energies, our spirit and buoyancy, are quite used up in what is called "getting on."

Another point of difference between the structure of American and of Athenian society must not be left out of the account. The time has gone by in which the energies of a hundred thousand men and women could be employed in ministering to the individual perfection of twenty-five thousand. Slavery, in the antique sense, — an absolute command of brain as well as of muscle, a slave-system of skilled labour, — we have never had. In our day it is for each man to earn his own bread; so that the struggle for existence has become universal. The work of one class does not furnish leisure for another class. The exceptional circumstances which freed the Athenian from industrial barbarism, and enabled him to become the great teacher and model of culture for the human race, have disappeared forever.

Then the general standard of comfortable living, as already hinted, has been greatly raised, and is still rising. What would have satisfied the ancient would seem to us like penury. We have a domestic life of which the Greek knew nothing. We live during a large part of the year in the house. Our social life goes on under the roof. Our houses are not mere places for eating and sleeping, like the houses of the ancients. It therefore costs us a large amount of toil to get what is called shelter for our heads. The sum which a young married man, in "good society," has to pay for his house and the furniture contained in it, would have enabled an Athenian to live in princely leisure from youth to old age. The sum which he has to pay out each year, to meet the complicated expense of living in such a house, would have more than sufficed to bring up an Athenian family. If worthy Strepsiades could have got an Asmodean glimpse of Fifth Avenue, or even of some unpretending street in Cambridge, he might have gone back to his aristocratic wife a sadder but a more contented man.

Wealth — or at least what would until lately have been called wealth — has become essential to comfort; while the opportunities for acquiring it have in recent times been immensely multiplied. To get money is, therefore, the chief end of life in our time and country. "Success in life" has become synonymous with "becoming wealthy." A man who is successful in what he undertakes is a man who makes his employment pay him money. Our normal type of character is that of the shrewd, circumspect business man; as in the Middle Ages it was that of the hardy warrior. And as in those days when fighting was a constant necessity, and when the only honourable way for a gentleman of high rank to make money was by freebooting, fighting came to be regarded as an end desirable in itself; so in these days the mere effort to accumulate has become a source of enjoyment rather than a means to it. The same truth is to be witnessed in aberrant types of character. The infatuated speculator and the close-fisted millionaire are our substitutes for the mediæval *berserkir*, — the man who loved the pell-mell of a contest so well that he would make war on his neighbour, just to keep his hand in. In like manner, while such crimes as murder and violent robbery have diminished in frequency during the past century, on the other hand such crimes as embezzlement, gambling in stocks, adulteration of goods, and using of false weights and measures, have probably increased. If Dick Turpin were now to be brought back to life, he would find the New York Custom-House a more congenial and profitable working-place than the king's highway.

The result of this universal quest for money is that we are always in a hurry. Our lives pass by in a whirl. It is all labour and no fruition. We work till we are weary; we carry our work home with us; it haunts our evenings, and disturbs our sleep as well as our digestion. Our minds are so burdened with it that our conversation, when serious, can dwell upon little else. If we step into a railway-car, or the smoking-room of a hotel,

or any other place where a dozen or two of men are gathered together, we shall hear them talking of stocks, of investments, of commercial paper, as if there were really nothing in this universe worth thinking of, save only the interchange of dollars and commodities. So constant and unremitted is our forced application, that our minds are dwarfed for everything except the prosecution of the one universal pursuit.

Are we now prepared for the completing of the contrast? Must we say that, as Athens was the most leisurely and the United States is the most hurried community known in history, so the Americans are, as a consequence of their hurry, lacking in thoroughness of culture? Or, since it is difficult to bring our modern culture directly into contrast with that of an ancient community, let me state the case after a different but equivalent fashion. Since the United States presents only an exaggerated type of the modern industrial community, since the turmoil of incessant money-getting, which affects all modern communities in large measure, affects us most seriously of all, shall it be said that we are, on the whole, less highly cultivated than our contemporaries in Western Europe? To a certain extent we must confess that this is the case. In the higher culture — in the culture of the whole man, according to the antique idea — we are undoubtedly behind all other nations with which it would be fair to compare ourselves. It will not do to decide a question like this merely by counting literary celebrities, although even thus we should by no means get a verdict in our favour. Since the beginning of this century, England has produced as many great writers and thinkers as France or Germany; yet the general status of culture in England is said — perhaps with truth — to be lower than it is in these countries. It is said that the average Englishman is less ready than the average German or Frenchman to sympathize with ideas which have no obvious market-value. Yet in England there is an amount of high culture among those not professionally scholars, which it

would be vain to seek among ourselves. The purposes of my argument, however, require that the comparison should be made between our own country and Western Europe in general. Compare, then, our best magazines — not solely with regard to their intrinsic excellence, but also with regard to the way in which they are sustained — with the Revue des Deux Mondes or the Journal des Débats. Or compare our leading politicians with men like Gladstone, Disraeli, or Sir G. C. Lewis; or even with such men as Brougham or Thiers. Or compare the slovenly style of our newspaper articles, I will not say with the exquisite prose of the lamented Prévost-Paradol, but with the ordinary prose of the French or English newspaper. But a far better illustration — for it goes down to the root of things — is suggested by the recent work of Matthew Arnold on the schools of the continent of Europe. The country of our time where the general culture is unquestionably the highest is Prussia. Now, in Prussia, they are able to have a Minister of Education, who is a member of the Cabinet. They are sure that this minister will not appoint or remove even an assistant professor for political reasons. Only once, as Arnold tells us, has such a thing been done; and then public opinion expressed itself in such an emphatic tone of disapproval that the displaced teacher was instantly appointed to another position. Nothing of this sort, says Arnold, could have occurred in England; but still less could it occur in America. Had we such an educational system, there would presently be an "Education Ring" to control it. Nor can this difference be ascribed to the less eager political activity of Germany. The Prussian state of things would have been possible in ancient Athens, where political life was as absorbing and nearly as turbulent as in the United States. The difference is due to our lack of faith in culture, a lack of faith in that of which we have not had adequate experience.

We lack culture because we live in a hurry, and because our attention is given up to pursuits which call into activity and

develop but one side of us. On the one hand contemplate Sokrates quietly entertaining a crowd in the Athenian market-place, and on the other hand consider Broadway with its eternal clatter, and its throngs of hurrying people elbowing and treading on each other's heels, and you will get a lively notion of the difference between the extreme phases of ancient and modern life. By the time we have thus rushed through our day, we have no strength left to devote to things spiritual. To-day finds us no nearer fruition than yesterday. And if perhaps the time at last arrives when fruition is practicable, our minds have run so long in the ruts that they cannot be twisted out.

As it is impossible for any person living in a given state of society to keep himself exempt from its influences, detrimental as well as beneficial, we find that even those who strive to make a literary occupation subservient to purposes of culture are not, save in rare cases, spared by the general turmoil. Those who have at once the ability, the taste, and the wealth needful for training themselves to the accomplishment of some many-sided and permanent work are of course very few. Nor have our universities yet provided themselves with the means for securing to literary talent the leisure which is essential to complete mental development, or to a high order of productiveness. Although in most industrial enterprises we know how to work together so successfully, in literature we have as yet no co-operation. We have not only no Paris, but we have not even a Tübingen, a Leipsic, or a Jena, or anything corresponding to the fellowships in the English universities. Our literary workers have no choice but to fall into the ranks, and make merchandise of their half-formed ideas. They must work without co-operation, they must write in a hurry, and they must write for those who have no leisure for aught but hasty and superficial reading.

Bursting boilers and custom-house frauds may have at first sight nothing to do with each other or with my subject. It is indisputable, however, that the horrible massacres perpetrated

every few weeks or months by our common carriers, and the disgraceful peculation in which we allow our public servants to indulge with hardly ever an effective word of protest, are alike to be ascribed to the same causes which interfere with our higher culture. It is by no means a mere accidental coincidence that for every dollar stolen by government officials in Prussia, at least fifty or a hundred are stolen in the United States. This does not show that the Germans are our superiors in average honesty, but it shows that they are our superiors in thoroughness. It is with them an imperative demand that any official whatever shall be qualified for his post; a principle of public economy which in our country is not simply ignored in practice, but often openly laughed at. But in a country where high intelligence and thorough training are imperatively demanded, it follows of necessity that these qualifications must insure for their possessors a permanent career in which the temptations to malfeasance or dishonesty are reduced to the minimum. On the other hand, in a country where intelligence and training have no surety that they are to carry the day against stupidity and inefficiency, the incentives to dishonourable conduct are overpowering. The result in our own political life is that the best men are driven in disgust from politics, and thus one of the noblest fields for the culture of the whole man is given over to be worked by swindlers and charlatans. To an Athenian such a severance of the highest culture from political life would have been utterly inconceivable. Obviously the deepest explanation of all this lies in our lack of belief in the necessity for high and thorough training. We do not value culture enough to keep it in our employ or to pay it for its services; and what is this short-sighted negligence but the outcome of the universal shiftlessness begotten of the habit of doing everything in a hurry? On every hand we may see the fruits of this shiftlessness, from buildings that tumble in, switches that are misplaced, furnaces that are ill-protected, fire-brigades that are without

discipline, up to unauthorized meddlings with the currency, and revenue laws which defeat their own purpose.

I said above that the attributes of American life which we should find it necessary for our purpose to signalize are simply the attributes of modern life in their most exaggerated phase. Is there not a certain sense in which all modern handiwork is hastily and imperfectly done? To begin with common household arts, does not every one know that old things are more durable than new things? Our grandfathers wore better shoes than we wear, because there was leisure enough to cure the leather properly. In old times a chair was made of seasoned wood, and its joints carefully fitted; its maker had leisure to see that it was well put together. Now a thousand are turned off at once by machinery, out of green wood, and, with their backs glued on, are hurried off to their evil fate, — destined to drop in pieces if they happen to stand near the fireplace, and liable to collapse under the weight of a heavy man. Some of us still preserve, as heirlooms, old tables and bedsteads of Cromwellian times: in the twenty-first century what will have become of our machine-made bedsteads and tables?

Perhaps it may seem odd to talk about tanning and joinery in connection with culture, but indeed there is a subtle bond of union holding together these things. Any phase of life can be understood only by associating with it some different phase. Sokrates himself has taught us how the homely things illustrate the grand things. If we turn to the art of musical composition, and inquire into some of the differences between our recent music and that of Händel's time, we shall alight upon the very criticism which Mr. Hill somewhere makes in comparing ancient with modern literature: the substance has improved, but the form has in some respects deteriorated. The modern music expresses the results of a richer and more varied emotional experience, and in wealth of harmonic resources, to say nothing of increased skill in orchestration, it is notably superior to old

time music. Along with this advance, however, there is a perceptible falling off in symmetry and completeness of design, and in what I would call spontaneousness of composition. I believe that this is because modern composers, as a rule, do not drudge patiently enough upon counterpoint. They do not get that absolute mastery over technical difficulties of figuration which was the great secret of the incredible facility and spontaneity of composition displayed by Händel and Bach. Among recent musicians Mendelssohn is the most thoroughly disciplined in the elements of counterpoint; and it is this perfect mastery of the technique of his art which has enabled him to outrank Schubert and Schumann, neither of whom would one venture to pronounce inferior to him in native wealth of musical ideas. May we not partly attribute to rudimentary deficiency in counterpoint the irregularity of structure which so often disfigures the works of the great Wagner and the lesser Liszt, and which the more ardent admirers of these composers are inclined to regard as a symptom of progress?

I am told that a similar illustration might be drawn from the modern history of painting; that, however noble the conceptions of the great painters of the present century, there are none who have gained such a complete mastery over the technicalities of drawing and the handling of the brush as was required in the times of Raphael, Titian, and Rubens. But on this point I can only speak from hearsay, and am quite willing to end here my series of illustrations, fearing that I may already have been wrongly set down as a *laudator temporis acti*. Not the idle praising of times gone by, but the getting a lesson from them which may be of use to us, has been my object. And I believe enough has been said to show that the great complexity of modern life, with its multiplicity of demands upon our energy, has got us into a state of chronic hurry, the results of which are everywhere to be seen in the shape of less thorough workmanship and less rounded culture.

For one moment let me stop to note a further source of the relative imperfection of modern culture, which is best illustrated in the case of literature. I allude to the immense, unorganized mass of literature in all departments, representing the accumulated acquisitions of past ages, which must form the basis of our own achievement, but with which our present methods of education seem inadequate to deal properly. Speaking roughly, modern literature may be said to be getting into the state which Roman jurisprudence was in before it was reformed by Justinian. Philosophic criticism has not yet reached the point at which it may serve as a natural codifier. We must read laboriously and expend a disproportionate amount of time and pains in winnowing the chaff from the wheat. This tends to make us "digs" or literary drudges; but I doubt if the "dig" is a thoroughly developed man. Goethe, with all his boundless knowledge, his universal curiosity, and his admirable capacity for work, was not a "dig." But this matter can only be hinted at; it is too large to be well discussed at the fag end of an essay while other points are pressing for consideration.

A state of chronic hurry not only directly hinders the performance of thorough work, but it has an indirect tendency to blunt the enjoyment of life. Let us consider for a moment one of the psychological consequences entailed by the strain of a too complex and rapid activity. Every one must have observed that in going off for a vacation of two or three weeks, or in getting freed in any way from the ruts of everyday life, time slackens its gait somewhat, and the events which occur are apt a few years later to cover a disproportionately large area in our recollections. This is because the human organism is a natural timepiece in which the ticks are conscious sensations. The greater the number of sensations which occupy the foreground of consciousness during the day, the longer the day seems in the retrospect. But the various groups of sensations which accompany our daily work tend to become automatic from

continual repetition, and to sink into the background of consciousness; and in a very complex and busied life the number of sensations or states of consciousness which can struggle up to the front and get attended to, is comparatively small. It is thus that the days seem so short when we are busy about every-day matters, and that they get blurred together, and as it were individually annihilated in recollection. When we travel, a comparatively large number of fresh sensations occupy attention, there is a maximum of consciousness, and a distinct image is left to loom up in memory. For the same reason the weeks and years are much longer to the child than to the grown man. The life is simpler and less hurried, so that there is time to attend to a great many sensations. Now this fact lies at the bottom of that keen enjoyment of existence which is the prerogative of childhood and early youth. The day is not rushed through by the automatic discharge of certain psychical functions, but each sensation stays long enough to make itself recognized. Now when once we understand the psychology of this matter, it becomes evident that the same contrast that holds between the child and the man must hold also between the ancient and the modern. The number of elements entering into ancient life were so few relatively, that there must have been far more than there is now of that intense realization of life which we can observe in children and remember of our own childhood. Space permitting, it would be easy to show from Greek literature how intense was this realization of life. But my point will already have been sufficiently apprehended. Already we cannot fail to see how difficult it is to get more than a minimum of conscious fruition out of a too complex and rapid activity.

One other point is worth noticing before we close. How is this turmoil of modern existence impressing itself upon the physical constitutions of modern men and women? When an individual man engages in furious productive activity, his friends warn him that he will break down. Does the collective

man of our time need some such friendly warning? Let us first get a hint from what foreigners think of us ultra-modernized Americans. Wandering journalists, of an ethnological turn of mind, who visit these shores, profess to be struck with the slenderness, the apparent lack of toughness, the dyspeptic look, of the American physique. And from such observations it has been seriously argued that the stalwart English race is suffering inevitable degeneracy in this foreign climate. I have even seen it doubted whether a race of men can ever become thoroughly naturalized in a locality to which it is not indigenous. To such vagaries it is a sufficient answer that the English are no more indigenous to England than to America. They are indigenous to Central Asia, and as they have survived the first transplantation, they may be safely counted on to survive the second. A more careful survey will teach us that the slow alteration of physique which is going on in this country is only an exaggeration of that which modern civilization is tending to bring about everywhere. It is caused by the premature and excessive strain upon the mental powers requisite to meet the emergencies of our complex life. The progress of events has thrown the work of sustaining life so largely upon the brain that we are beginning to sacrifice the physical to the intellectual. We are growing *spirituelle* in appearance at the expense of robustness. Compare any typical Greek face, with its firm muscles, its symmetry of feature, and its serenity of expression, to a typical modern portrait, with its more delicate contour, its exaggerated forehead, its thoughtful, perhaps jaded look. Or consider in what respects the grand faces of the Plantagenet monarchs differ from the refined countenances of the leading English statesmen of to-day. Or again, consider the familiar pictures of the Oxford and Harvard crews which rowed a race on the Thames in 1869, and observe how much less youthful are the faces of the Americans. By contrast they almost look careworn. The summing up of countless such facts is that modern

civilization is making us nervous. Our most formidable diseases are of nervous origin. We seem to have got rid of the mediæval plague and many of its typhoid congeners; but instead we have an increased amount of insanity, methomania, consumption, dyspepsia, and paralysis. In this fact it is plainly written that we are suffering physically from the over-work and over-excitement entailed by excessive hurry.

In view of these various but nearly related points of difference between ancient and modern life as studied in their extreme manifestations, it cannot be denied that while we have gained much, we have also lost a good deal that is valuable, in our progress. We cannot but suspect that we are not in all points more highly favoured than the ancients. And it becomes probable that Athens, at all events, which I have chosen as my example, may have exhibited an adumbration of a state of things which, for the world at large, is still in the future, — still to be remotely hoped for. The rich complexity of modern social achievement is attained at the cost of individual many-sidedness. As Tennyson puts it, "The individual withers and the world is more and more." Yet the individual does not exist for the sake of society, as the positivists would have us believe, but society exists for the sake of the individual. And the test of complete social life is the opportunity which it affords for complete individual life. Tried by this test, our contemporary civilization will appear seriously defective, — excellent only as a preparation for something better.

This is the true light in which to regard it. This incessant turmoil, this rage for accumulation of wealth, this crowding, jostling, and trampling upon one another, cannot be regarded as permanent, or as anything more than the accompaniment of a transitional stage of civilization. There must be a limit to the extent to which the standard of comfortable living can be raised. The industrial organization of society, which is now but beginning, must culminate in a state of things in which the means

of expense will exceed the demand for expense, in which the human race will have some surplus capital. The incessant manual labour which the ancients relegated to slaves will in course of time be more and more largely performed by inanimate machinery. Unskilled labour will for the most part disappear. Skilled labour will consist in the guiding of implements contrived with versatile cunning for the relief of human nerve and muscle. Ultimately there will be no unsettled land to fill, no frontier life, no savage races to be assimilated or extirpated, no extensive migration. Thus life will again become comparatively stationary. The chances for making great fortunes quickly will be diminished, while the facilities for acquiring a competence by steady labour will be increased. When every one is able to reach the normal standard of comfortable living, we must suppose that the exaggerated appetite for wealth and display will gradually disappear. We shall be more easily satisfied, and thus enjoy more leisure. It may be that there will ultimately exist, over the civilized world, conditions as favourable to the complete fruition of life as those which formerly existed within the narrow circuit of Attika; save that the part once played by enslaved human brain and muscle will finally be played by the enslaved forces of insentient nature. Society will at last bear the test of providing for the complete development of its individual members.

So, at least, we may hope; such is the probability which the progress of events, when carefully questioned, sketches out for us. "Need we fear," asks Mr. Greg, "that the world would stagnate under such a change? Need we guard ourselves against the misconstruction of being held to recommend a life of complacent and inglorious inaction? We think not. We would only substitute a nobler for a meaner strife, — a rational for an excessive toil, — an enjoyment that springs from serenity, for one that springs from excitement only. . . . To each time its own preacher, to each excess its own counteraction. In an

age of dissipation, languor, and stagnation, we should join with Mr. Carlyle in preaching the 'Evangel of Work,' and say with him, 'Blessed is the man who has found his work, — let him ask no other blessedness.' In an age of strenuous, frenzied, — and often utterly irrational and objectless exertion, we join Mr. Mill in preaching the milder and more needed 'Evangel of Leisure.'"

Bearing all these things in mind, we may understand the remark of the supremely cultivated Goethe, when asked who were his masters: *Die Griechen, die Griechen, und immer die Griechen.* We may appreciate the significance of Mr. Mill's argument in favour of the study of antiquity, that it preserves the tradition of an era of individual completeness. There is a disposition growing among us to remodel our methods of education in conformity with the temporary requirements of the age in which we live. In this endeavour there is much that is wise and practical; but in so far as it tends to the neglect of antiquity, I cannot think it well-timed. Our education should not only enhance the value of what we possess; it should also supply the consciousness of what we lack. And while, for generations to come, we pass toilfully through an era of exorbitant industrialism, some fragment of our time will not be misspent in keeping alive the tradition of a state of things which was once briefly enjoyed by a little community, but which, in the distant future, will, as it is hoped, become the permanent possession of all mankind.

THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY[1]

James Anthony Froude

(1818–1894)

[Among the historians who contributed to the achievements of English prose in the nineteenth century, Macaulay and Carlyle were, from the standpoint of literary distinction, the greatest. But a later group, including Freeman, Green, and Froude, in varying degree disciples of the older masters, also won enthusiastic recognition. Freeman, for many years a bitter enemy of Froude, wrote with a scientifically scrupulous regard for fidelity to fact. But Green and Froude, who enjoyed a much larger popularity, loved the picturesque and strove rather to vivify the color and complexion of past times and people than to record with stern precision the knowable and the known. Froude's chief work was a *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Armada*, in twelve volumes, but he expended some of his best energies on *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, published in several collections between 1867 and 1883. The lecture that follows was delivered at the Royal Institution in 1864, and was published in the first volume of *Short Studies*.

Froude, like his friend Carlyle, whose literary executor and biographer he became, wrote in the spirit of the literary artist, though neither with the stylistic quirks and oddities of Carlyle nor with the mechanical unimpeachableness of Macaulay. But he possessed a swift and warmly imaginative pen, which often gave his pages the effect of brilliant fiction. He believed that history and science were incompatible, that history should be written dramatically, without any trammels of theory or didactic purpose. The Mr. Buckle whose principles he controverts in this lecture, had planned and executed his unfinished *History of Civilization in Europe* according to a doctrine that general effects in history are to be accounted for by certain physical causes, and had boldly distorted facts to suit his theory. "The address of history," Froude maintains, "is less to the understanding than to the higher emotions." The "origin of human actions" is to be sought in "mysterious properties of the mind" rather than in "influences which are palpable and ponderable."]

[1] From *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, New York: Charles Scribner and Company, 1868.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — I have undertaken to speak to you this evening on what is called the Science of History. I fear it is a dry subject; and there seems, indeed, something incongruous in the very connection of such words as Science and History. It is as if we were to talk of the color of sound, or the longitude of the Rule-of-three. Where it is so difficult to make out the truth on the commonest disputed fact in matters passing under our very eyes, how can we talk of a science in things long past, which come to us only through books? It often seems to me as if History was like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those which do not suit our purpose.

I will try to make the thing intelligible, and I will try not to weary you; but I am doubtful of my success either way. First, however, I wish to say a word or two about the eminent person whose name is connected with this way of looking at History, and whose premature death struck us all with such a sudden sorrow. Many of you, perhaps, recollect Mr. Buckle as he stood not so long ago in this place. He spoke more than an hour without a note, — never repeating himself, never wasting words; laying out his matter as easily and as pleasantly as if he had been talking to us at his own fireside. We might think what we pleased of Mr. Buckle's views, but it was plain enough that he was a man of uncommon power; and he had qualities also — qualities to which he, perhaps, himself attached little value — as rare as they were admirable.

Most of us, when we have hit on something which we are pleased to think important and original, feel as if we should burst with it. We come out into the book-market with our wares in hand, and ask for thanks and recognition. Mr. Buckle, at an early age, conceived the thought which made him famous, but he took the measure of his abilities. He knew that whenever he pleased he could command personal distinction, but he cared

more for his subject than for himself. He was contented to work with patient reticence, unknown and unheard of, for twenty years; and then, at middle life, he produced a work which was translated at once into French and German, and, of all places in the world, fluttered the dovecotes of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg.

Goethe says somewhere, that, as soon as a man has done any thing remarkable, there seems to be a general conspiracy to prevent him from doing it again. He is feasted, fêted, caressed; his time is stolen from him by breakfasts, dinners, societies, idle businesses of a thousand kinds. Mr. Buckle had his share of all this; but there are also more dangerous enemies that wait upon success like his. He had scarcely won for himself the place which he deserved, than his health was found shattered by his labours. He had but time to show us how large a man he was, time just to sketch the outlines of his philosophy, and he passed away as suddenly as he appeared. He went abroad to recover strength for his work, but his work was done with and over. He died of a fever at Damascus, vexed only that he was compelled to leave it uncompleted. Almost his last conscious words were, "My book, my book! I shall never finish my book!" He went away as he had lived, nobly careless of himself, and thinking only of the thing which he had undertaken to do.

But his labour had not been thrown away. Disagree with him as we might, the effect which he had already produced was unmistakable, and it is not likely to pass away. What he said was not essentially new. Some such interpretation of human things is as early as the beginning of thought. But Mr. Buckle, on the one hand, had the art which belongs to men of genius: he could present his opinions with peculiar distinctness; and, on the other hand, there is much in the mode of speculation at present current among us for which those opinions have an unusual fascination. They do not please us, but they excite

and irritate us. We are angry with them; and we betray, in being so, an uneasy misgiving that there may be more truth in those opinions than we like to allow.

Mr. Buckle's general theory was something of this kind: When human creatures began first to look about them in the world they lived in, there seemed to be no order in any thing. Days and nights were not the same length. The air was sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Some of the stars rose and set like the sun; some were almost motionless in the sky; some described circles round a central star above the north horizon. The planets went on principles of their own; and in the elements there seemed nothing but caprice. Sun and moon would at times go out in eclipse. Sometimes the earth itself would shake under men's feet; and they could only suppose that earth and air and sky and water were inhabited and managed by creatures as wayward as themselves.

Time went on, and the disorder began to arrange itself. Certain influences seemed beneficent to men, others malignant and destructive; and the world was supposed to be animated by good spirits and evil spirits, who were continually fighting against each other, in outward nature and in human creatures themselves. Finally, as men observed more and imagined less, these interpretations gave way also. Phenomena the most opposite in effect were seen to be the result of the same natural law. The fire did not burn the house down if the owners of it were careful, but remained on the hearth and boiled the pot; nor did it seem more inclined to burn a bad man's house down than a good man's, provided the badness did not take the form of negligence. The phenomena of nature were found for the most part to proceed in an orderly, regular way, and their variations to be such as could be counted upon. From observing the order of things, the step was easy to cause and effect. An eclipse, instead of being a sign of the anger of Heaven, was found to be the necessary and innocent result of the relative

position of sun, moon, and earth. The comets became bodies in space, unrelated to the beings who had imagined that all creation was watching them and their doings. By degrees caprice, volition, all symptoms of arbitrary action, disappeared out of the universe; and almost every phenomenon in earth or heaven was found attributable to some law, either understood or perceived to exist. Thus nature was reclaimed from the imagination. The first fantastic conception of things gave way before the moral; the moral in turn gave way before the natural; and at last there was left but one small tract of jungle where the theory of law had failed to penetrate, — the doings and characters of human creatures themselves.

There, and only there, amidst the conflicts of reason and emotion, conscience and desire, spiritual forces were still conceived to exist. Cause and effect were not traceable when there was a free volition to disturb the connection. In all other things, from a given set of conditions the consequences necessarily followed. With man, the word "law" changed its meaning; and instead of a fixed order, which he could not choose but follow, it became a moral precept, which he might disobey if he dared.

This it was which Mr. Buckle disbelieved. The economy which prevailed throughout nature, he thought it very unlikely should admit of this exception. He considered that human beings acted necessarily from the impulse of outward circumstances upon their mental and bodily condition at any given moment. Every man, he said, acted from a motive; and his conduct was determined by the motive which affected him most powerfully. Every man naturally desires what he supposes to be good for him; but, to do well, he must know well. He will eat poison, so long as he does not know that it is poison. Let him see that it will kill him, and he will not touch it. The question was not of moral right and wrong. Once let him be thoroughly made to feel that the thing is destructive, and he will leave it alone by the law of his nature. His virtues are the result

of knowledge; his faults, the necessary consequence of the want of it. A boy desires to draw. He knows nothing about it: he draws men like trees or houses, with their centre of gravity anywhere. He makes mistakes, because he knows no better. We do not blame him. Till he is better taught, he cannot help it. But his instruction begins. He arrives at straight lines; then at solids; then at curves. He learns perspective, and light and shade. He observes more accurately the forms which he wishes to represent. He perceives effects, and he perceives the means by which they are produced. He has learned what to do; and, in part, he has learned how to do it. His after-progress will depend on the amount of force which his nature possesses; but all this is as natural as the growth of an acorn. You do not preach to the acorn that it is its duty to become a large tree; you do not preach to the art-pupil that it is his duty to become a Holbein. You plant your acorn in favorable soil, where it can have light and air, and be sheltered from the wind; you remove the superfluous branches, you train the strength into the leading shoots. The acorn will then become as fine a tree as it has vital force to become. The difference between men and other things is only in the largeness and variety of man's capacities; and in this special capacity, that he alone has the power of observing the circumstances favourable to his own growth, and can apply them for himself, yet, again, with this condition, — that he is not, as is commonly supposed, free to choose whether he will make use of these appliances or not. When he knows what is good for him, he will choose it; and he will judge what is good for him by the circumstances which have made him what he is.

And what he would do, Mr. Buckle supposed that he always had done. His history had been a natural growth as much as the growth of the acorn. His improvement had followed the progress of his knowledge; and, by a comparison of his outward circumstances with the condition of his mind, his whole proceedings on this planet, his creeds and constitutions, his good deeds

and his bad, his arts and his sciences, his empires and his revolutions, would be found all to arrange themselves into clear relations of cause and effect.

If, when Mr. Buckle pressed his conclusions, we objected the difficulty of finding what the truth about past times really was, he would admit it candidly as far as concerned individuals; but there was not the same difficulty, he said, with masses of men. We might disagree about the character of Julius or Tiberius Cæsar, but we could know well enough the Romans of the Empire. We had their literature to tell us how they thought; we had their laws to tell us how they governed; we had the broad face of the world, the huge mountainous outline of their general doings upon it, to tell us how they acted. He believed it was all reducible to laws, and could be made as intelligible as the growth of the chalk cliffs or the coal measures.

And thus consistently Mr. Buckle cared little for individuals. He did not believe (as some one has said) that the history of mankind is the history of its great men. Great men with him were but larger atoms, obeying the same impulses with the rest, only perhaps a trifle more erratic. With them or without them, the course of things would have been much the same.

As an illustration of the truth of his view, he would point to the new science of Political Economy. Here already was a large area of human activity in which natural laws were found to act unerringly. Men had gone on for centuries trying to regulate trade on moral principles. They would fix wages according to some imaginary rule of fairness; they would fix prices by what they considered things ought to cost; they encouraged one trade or discouraged another, for moral reasons. They might as well have tried to work a steam-engine on moral reasons. The great statesmen whose names were connected with these enterprises might have as well legislated that water should run up-hill. There were natural laws, fixed in the conditions of things; and

to contend against them was the old battle of the Titans against the gods.

As it was with political economy, so it was with all other forms of human activity; and, as the true laws of political economy explained the troubles which people fell into in old times because they were ignorant of them, so the true laws of human nature, as soon as we knew them, would explain their mistakes in more serious matters, and enable us to manage better for the future. Geographical position, climate, air, soil, and the like, had their several influences. The northern nations are hardy and industrious, because they must till the earth if they would eat the fruits of it, and because the temperature is too low to make an idle life enjoyable. In the south, the soil is more productive, while less food is wanted and fewer clothes; and, in the exquisite air, exertion is not needed to make the sense of existence delightful. Therefore, in the south we find men lazy, and indolent.

True, there are difficulties in these views; the home of the languid Italian was the home also of the sternest race of whom the story of mankind retains a record. And again, when we are told that the Spaniards are superstitious because Spain is a country of earthquakes, we remember Japan, the spot in all the world where earthquakes are most frequent, and where at the same time there is the most serene disbelief in any supernatural agency whatsoever.

Moreover, if men grow into what they are by natural laws, they cannot help being what they are; and, if they cannot help being what they are, a good deal will have to be altered in our general view of human obligations and responsibilities.

That, however, in these theories there is a great deal of truth, is quite certain, were there but a hope that those who maintain them would be contented with that admission. A man born in a Mahometan country grows up a Mahometan; in a Catholic country, a Catholic; in a Protestant country, a Prot-

estant. His opinions are like his language: he learns to think as he learns to speak; and it is absurd to suppose him responsible for being what nature makes him. We take pains to educate children. There is a good education and a bad education; there are rules well ascertained by which characters are influenced; and, clearly enough, it is no mere matter for a boy's free will whether he turns out well or ill. We try to train him into good habits; we keep him out of the way of temptations; we see that he is well taught; we mix kindness and strictness; we surround him with every good influence we can command. These are what are termed the advantages of a good education; and, if we fail to provide those under our care with it, and if they go wrong, the responsibility we feel is as much ours as theirs. This is at once an admission of the power over us of outward circumstances.

In the same way, we allow for the strength of temptations, and the like.

In general, it is perfectly obvious that men do necessarily absorb, out of the influences in which they grow up, something which gives a complexion to their whole after-character.

When historians have to relate great social or speculative changes, the overthrow of a monarch or the establishment of a creed, they do but half their duty if they merely relate the events. In an account, for instance, of the rise of Mahometanism, it is not enough to describe the character of the Prophet, the ends which he set before him, the means which he made use of, and the effect which he produced; the historian must show what there was in the condition of the eastern races which enabled Mahomet to act upon them so powerfully; their existing beliefs, their existing moral and political condition.

In our estimate of the past, and in our calculations of the future, in the judgments which we pass upon one another, we measure responsibility, not by the thing done, but by the opportunities which people have had of knowing better or worse.

In the efforts which we make to keep our children from bad associations or friends, we admit that external circumstances have a powerful effect in making men what they are.

But are circumstances everything? That is the whole question. A science of history, if it is more than a misleading name, implies that the relation between cause and effect holds in human things as completely as in all others; that the origin of human actions is not to be looked for in mysterious properties of the mind, but in influences which are palpable and ponderable.

When natural causes are liable to be set aside and neutralized by what is called volition, the word Science is out of place. If it is free to man to choose what he will do or not do, there is no adequate science of him. If there is a science of him, there is no free choice, and the praise or blame with which we regard one another is impertinent and out of place.

I am trespassing upon these ethical grounds because, unless I do, the subject cannot be made intelligible. Mankind are but an aggregate of individuals; History is but the record of individual action: and what is true of the part is true of the whole.

We feel keenly about such things, and, when the logic becomes perplexing, we are apt to grow rhetorical about them. But rhetoric is only misleading. Whatever the truth may be, it is best that we should know it; and for truth of any kind we should keep our heads and hearts as cool as we can.

I will say at once, that, if we had the whole case before us; if we were taken, like Leibnitz's Tarquin, into the council chamber of Nature, and were shown what we really were, where we came from, and where we were going, however unpleasant it might be for some of us to find ourselves like Tarquin, made into villains, from the subtle necessities of "the best of all possible worlds," — nevertheless, some such theory as Mr. Buckle's might possibly turn out to be true. Likely enough there is some great "equation of the universe" where the value of the unknown quantities can be determined. But we

must treat things in relation to our own powers and position; and the question is, whether the sweep of those vast curves can be measured by the intellect of creatures of a day like ourselves.

The "Faust" of Goethe, tired of the barren round of earthly knowledge, calls magic to his aid. He desires, first, to see the spirit of the Macrocosmos, but his heart fails him before he ventures that tremendous experiment, and he summons before him, instead, the spirit of his own race. There he feels himself at home. The stream of life and the storm of action, the everlasting ocean of existence, the web and the woof, and the roaring loom of Time, — he gazes upon them all, and in passionate exultation claims fellowship with the awful thing before him. But the majestic vision fades, and a voice comes to him, — "Thou art fellow with the spirits which thy mind can grasp, not with me."

Had Mr. Buckle tried to follow his principles into detail, it might have fared no better with him than with "Faust."

What are the conditions of a science? and when may any subject be said to enter the scientific stage? I suppose when the facts of it begin to resolve themselves into groups; when phenomena are no longer isolated experiences, but appear in connection and order; when, after certain antecedents, certain consequences are uniformly seen to follow; when facts enough have been collected to furnish a basis for conjectural explanation; and when conjectures have so far ceased to be utterly vague that it is possible in some degree to foresee the future by the help of them.

Till a subject has advanced as far as this, to speak of a science of it is an abuse of language. It is not enough to say that there must be a science of human beings because there is a science of all other things. This is like saying the planets must be inhabited because the only planet of which we have any experience is inhabited. It may or it may not be true, but

it is not a practical question; it does not affect the practical treatment of the matter in hand.

Let us look at the history of Astronomy.

So long as sun, moon, and planets were supposed to be gods or angels; so long as the sword of Orion was not a metaphor, but a fact, and the groups of stars which inlaid the floor of heaven were the glittering trophies of the loves and wars of the Pantheon, — so long there was no science of Astronomy. There was fancy, imagination, poetry, perhaps reverence, but no science. As soon, however, as it was observed that the stars retained their relative places; that the times of their rising and setting varied with the seasons; that sun, moon, and planets moved among them in a plane, and the belt of the Zodiac was marked out and divided, — then a new order of things began. Traces of the earlier stage remained in the names of the signs and constellations, just as the Scandinavian mythology survives now in the names of the days of the week: but, for all that, the understanding was now at work on the thing; Science had begun, and the first triumph of it was the power of foretelling the future. Eclipses were perceived to recur in cycles of nineteen years, and philosophers were able to say when an eclipse was to be looked for. The periods of the planets were determined. Theories were invented to account for their eccentricities; and, false as those theories might be, the position of the planets could be calculated with moderate certainty by them. The very first result of the science, in its most imperfect stage, was a power of foresight; and this was possible before any one true astronomical law had been discovered.

We should not therefore question the possibility of a science of history because the explanations of its phenomena were rudimentary or imperfect: that they might be, and might long continue to be, and yet enough might be done to show that there was such a thing, and that it was not entirely without use. But how was it that in those rude days, with small knowledge

of mathematics, and with no better instruments than flat walls and dial-plates, those first astronomers made progress so considerable? Because, I suppose, the phenomena which they were observing recurred, for the most part, within moderate intervals; so that they could collect large experience within the compass of their natural lives: because days and months and years were measurable periods, and within them the more simple phenomena perpetually repeated themselves.

But how would it have been if, instead of turning on its axis once in twenty-four hours, the earth had taken a year about it; if the year had been nearly four hundred years; if man's life had been no longer than it is, and for the initial steps of astronomy there had been nothing to depend upon except observations recorded in history? How many ages would have passed, had this been our condition, before it would have occurred to any one, that, in what they saw night after night, there was any kind of order at all?

We can see to some extent how it would have been, by the present state of those parts of the science which in fact depend on remote recorded observations. The movements of the comets are still extremely uncertain. The times of their return can be calculated only with the greatest vagueness.

And yet such a hypothesis as I have suggested would but inadequately express the position in which we are in fact placed towards history. There the phenomena never repeat themselves. There we are dependent wholly on the record of things said to have happened once, but which never happen or can happen a second time. There no experiment is possible; we can watch for no recurring fact to test the worth of our conjectures. It has been suggested fancifully, that, if we consider the universe to be infinite, time is the same as eternity, and the past is perpetually present. Light takes nine years to come to us from Sirius: those rays which we may see to-night, when we leave this place, left Sirius nine years ago; and, could the inhabitants

of Sirius see the earth at this moment, they would see the English army in the trenches before Sebastopol, Florence Nightingale watching at Scutari over the wounded at Inkermann, and the peace of England undisturbed by "Essays and Reviews."

As the stars recede into distance, so time recedes with them; and there may be, and probably are, stars from which Noah might be seen stepping into the ark, Eve listening to the temptation of the serpent, or that older race, eating the oysters and leaving the shell-heaps behind them, when the Baltic was an open sea.

Could we but compare notes, something might be done; but of this there is no present hope, and without it there will be no science of history. Eclipses, recorded in ancient books, can be verified by calculations, and lost dates can be recovered by them; and we can foresee, by the laws which they follow, when there will be eclipses again. Will a time ever be when the lost secret of the foundation of Rome can be recovered by historic laws? If not, where is our science? It may be said that this is a particular fact, that we can deal satisfactorily with general phenomena affecting eras and cycles. Well, then, let us take some general phenomenon; Mahometanism, for instance, or Buddhism. Those are large enough. Can you imagine a science which would have[1] *foretold* such movements as those? The state of things out of which they rose is obscure; but, suppose it not obscure, can you conceive that, with any amount of historical insight into the old oriental beliefs, you could have seen that they were about to transform themselves into those particular forms and no other?

It is not enough to say, that after the fact, you can understand partially how Mahometanism came to be. All historians worth the name have told us something about that. But when we

[1] It is objected that Geology is a science: yet that Geology cannot foretell the future changes of the earth's surface. Geology is not a century old, and its periods are measured by millions of years. Yet, if Geology cannot foretell future facts, it enabled Sir Roderick Murchison to foretell the discovery of Australian gold.

talk of science, we mean something with more ambitious pretences, we mean something which can foresee as well as explain; and, thus looked at, to state the problem is to show its absurdity. As little could the wisest man have foreseen this mighty revolution, as thirty years ago such a thing as Mormonism could have been anticipated in America; as little as it could have been foreseen that table-turning and spirit-rapping would have been an outcome of the scientific culture of England in the nineteenth century.

The greatest of Roman thinkers, gazing mournfully at the seething mass of moral putrefaction round him, detected and deigned to notice among its elements a certain detestable superstition, so he called it, rising up amidst the offscouring of the Jews, which was named Christianity. Could Tactitus have looked forward nine centuries to the Rome of Gregory VII., could he have beheld the representative of the majesty of the Cæsars holding the stirrup of the Pontiff of that vile and execrated sect, the spectacle would scarcely have appeared to him the fulfillment of a rational expectation, or an intelligible result of the causes in operation round him. Tacitus, indeed, was born before the science of history; but would M. Comte have seen any more clearly?

Nor is the case much better if we are less hard upon our philosophy; if we content ourselves with the past, and require only a scientific explanation of that.

First, for the facts themselves. They come to us through the minds of those who recorded them, neither machines nor angels, but fallible creatures, with human passions and prejudices. Tacitus and Thucydides were perhaps the ablest men who ever gave themselves to writing history; the ablest, and also the most incapable of conscious falsehood. Yet even now, after all these centuries, the truth of what they relate is called in question. Good reasons can be given to show that neither of them can be confidently trusted. If we doubt with these, whom are we to believe?

Or, again, let the fact be granted. To revert to my simile of the box of letters, you have but to select such facts as suit you, you have but to leave alone those which do not suit you, and, let your theory of history be what it will, you can find no difficulty in providing facts to prove it.

You may have your Hegel's philosophy of history, or you may have your Schlegel's philosophy of history; you may prove from history that the world is governed in detail by a special Providence; you may prove that there is no sign of any moral agent in the universe, except man; you may believe, if you like it, in the old theory of the wisdom of antiquity; you may speak, as was the fashion in the fifteenth century, of "our fathers, who had more wit and wisdom than we;" or you may talk of "our barbarian ancestors," and describe their wars as the scuffling of kites and crows.

You may maintain that the evolution of humanity has been an unbroken progress towards perfection; you may maintain that there has been no progress at all, and that man remains the same poor creature that he ever was; or, lastly, you may say, with the author of the "Contract Social," that men were purest and best in primeval simplicity, —

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

In all or any of these views, history will stand your friend. History, in its passive irony, will make no objection. Like Jarno, in Goethe's novel, it will not condescend to argue with you, and will provide you with abundant illustrations of anything which you may wish to believe.

"What is history," said Napoleon, "but a fiction agreed upon?" "My friend," said Faust to the student, who was growing enthusiastic about the spirit of past ages, — "my friend, the times which are gone are a book with seven seals; and what you call the spirit of past ages is but the spirit of this or that worthy gentleman in whose mind those ages are reflected."

One lesson, and only one, history may be said to repeat with distinctness: that the world is built somehow on moral foundations; that, in the long run, it is well with the good; in the long run, it is ill with the wicked. But this is no science; it is no more than the old doctrine taught long ago by the Hebrew prophets. The theories of M. Comte and his disciples advance us, after all, not a step beyond the trodden and familiar ground. If men are not entirely animals, they are at least half animals, and are subject in this aspect of them to the condition of animals. So far as those parts of man's doings are concerned, which neither have, nor need have, anything moral about them, so far the laws of him are calculable. There are laws for his digestion, and laws of the means by which his digestive organs are supplied with matter. But pass beyond them and where are we? In a world where it would be as easy to calculate men's actions by laws like those of positive philosophy as to measure the orbit of Neptune with a foot-rule, or weigh Sirius in a grocer's scale.

And it is not difficult to see why this should be. The first principle, on which the theory of a science of history can be plausibly argued, is that all actions whatsoever arise from self-interest. It may be enlightened self-interest, it may be unenlightened; but it is assumed as an axiom, that every man, in whatever he does, is aiming at something which he considers will promote his happiness. His conduct is not determined by his will; it is determined by the object of his desire. Adam Smith, in laying the foundations of political economy, expressly eliminates every other motive. He does not say that men never act on other motives; still less, that they never ought to act on other motives. He asserts merely that, as far as the arts of production are concerned, and of buying and selling, the action of self-interest may be counted upon as uniform. What Adam Smith says of political economy, Mr. Buckle would extend over the whole circle of human activity.

Now, that which especially distinguishes a high order of man from a low order of man — that which constitutes human goodness, human greatness, human nobleness — is surely not the degree of enlightenment with which men pursue their own advantage: but it is self-forgetfulness; it is self-sacrifice; it is the disregard of personal pleasure, personal indulgence, personal advantages remote or present, because some other line of conduct is more right.

We are sometimes told that this is but another way of expressing the same thing: that, when a man prefers doing what is right, it is only because to do right gives him a higher satisfaction. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be a difference in the very heart and nature of things. The martyr goes to the stake, the patriot to the scaffold, not with a view to any future reward to themselves, but because it is a glory to fling away their lives for truth and freedom. And so through all phases of existence, to the smallest details of common life, the beautiful character is the unselfish character. Those whom we most love and admire are those to whom the thought of self seems never to occur; who do simply and with no ulterior aim — with no thought whether it will be pleasant to themselves or unpleasant — that which is good and right and generous.

Is this still selfishness, only more enlightened? I do not think so. The essence of true nobility is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower. Surely it is a paradox to speak of the self-interest of a martyr who dies for a cause, the triumph of which he will never enjoy; and the greatest of that great company in all ages would have done what they did, had their personal prospects closed with the grave. Nay, there have been those so zealous for some glorious principle as to wish themselves blotted out of the book of Heaven if the cause of Heaven could succeed.

And out of this mysterious quality, whatever it be, arise the higher relations of human life, the higher modes of human obligation. Kant, the philosopher, used to say that there were

two things which overwhelmed him with awe as he thought of them. One was the star-sown deep of space, without limit and without end; the other was, right and wrong. Right, the sacrifice of self to good; wrong, the sacrifice of good to self, — not graduated objects of desire, to which we are determined by the degrees of our knowledge, but wide asunder as pole and pole, as light and darkness: one the object of infinite love; the other, the object of infinite detestation and scorn. It is in this marvelous power in men to do wrong (it is an old story, but none the less true for that), — it is in this power to do wrong — wrong or right, as it lies somehow with ourselves to choose — that the impossibility stands of forming scientific calculations of what men will do before the fact, or scientific explanations of what they have done after the fact. If men were consistently selfish, you might analyze their motives; if they were consistently noble, they would express in their conduct the laws of the highest perfection. But so long as two natures are mixed together, and the strange creature which results from the combination is now under one influence and now under another, so long you will make nothing of him except from the old-fashioned moral — or, if you please, imaginative — point of view.

Even the laws of political economy itself cease to guide us when they touch moral government. So long as labor is a chattel to be bought and sold, so long, like other commodities, it follows the condition of supply and demand. But if, for his misfortune, an employer considers that he stands in human relations towards his workmen; if he believes, rightly or wrongly, that he is responsible for them; that in return for their labor he is bound to see that their children are decently taught, and they and their families decently fed and clothed and lodged; that he ought to care for them in sickness and in old age, — then political economy will no longer direct him, and the relations between himself and his dependents will have to be arranged on quite other principles.

So long as he considers only his own material profit, so long supply and demand will settle every difficulty; but the introduction of a new factor spoils the equation.

And it is precisely in this debatable ground of low motives and noble emotions; in the struggle, ever failing yet ever renewed, to carry truth and justice into the administration of human society; in the establishment of states and in the overthrow of tyrannies; in the rise and fall of creeds; in the world of ideas; in the character and deeds of the great actors in the drama of life, where good and evil fight out their everlasting battle, now ranged in opposite camps, now and more often in the heart, both of them, of each living man, — that the true human interest of history resides. The progress of industries, the growth of material and mechanical civilization, are interesting; but they are not the most interesting. They have their reward in the increase of material comforts; but, unless we are mistaken about our nature, they do not highly concern us after all.

Once more: not only is there in men this baffling duality of principle, but there is something else in us which still more defies scientific analysis.

Mr. Buckle would deliver himself from the eccentricities of this and that individual by a doctrine of averages. Though he cannot tell whether A, B or C will cut his throat, he may assure himself that one man in every fifty thousand, or thereabout (I forget the exact proportion), will cut his throat, and with this he consoles himself. No doubt it is a comforting discovery. Unfortunately, the average of one generation need not be the average of the next. We may be converted by the Japanese, for all that we know, and the Japanese methods of taking leave of life may become fashionable among us. Nay, did not Novalis suggest that the whole race of men would at last become so disgusted with their impotence, that they would extinguish themselves by a simultaneous act of suicide, and make room for a better order of beings? Anyhow, the fountain out of which

the race is flowing perpetually changes; no two generations are alike. Whether there is a change in the organization itself we cannot tell; but this is certain, — that, as the planet varies with the atmosphere which surrounds it, so each new generation varies from the last, because it inhales as its atmosphere the accumulated experience and knowledge of the whole past of the world. These things form the spiritual air which we breathe as we grow; and, in the infinite multiplicity of elements of which that air is now composed, it is forever matter of conjecture what the minds will be like which expand under its influence.

From the England of Fielding and Richardson to the England of Miss Austen, from the England of Miss Austen to the England of Railways and Freetrade, how vast the change! Yet perhaps Sir Charles Grandison would not seem so strange to us now as one of ourselves will seem to our great-grandchildren. The world moves faster and faster; and the difference will probably be considerably greater.

The temper of each new generation is a continual surprise. The Fates delight to contradict our most confident expectations. Gibbon believed that the era of conquerors was at an end. Had he lived out the full life of man, he would have seen Europe at the feet of Napoleon. But a few years ago we believed the world had grown too civilized for war, and the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was to be the inauguration of a new era. Battles bloody as Napoleon's are now the familiar tale of every day; and the arts which have made greater progress are the arts of destruction. What next? We may strain our eyes into the future which lies beyond this waning century; but never was conjecture more at fault. It is blank darkness, which even the imagination fails to people.

What, then, is the use of History, and what are its lessons? If it can tell us little of the past, and nothing of the future, why waste our time over so barren a study?

First, it is a voice forever sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust or vanity, the price has to be paid at last; not always by the chief offenders, but paid by some one. Justice and truth alone endure and live. Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes at last to them, in French revolutions and other terrible ways.

That is one lesson of History. Another is, that we should draw no horoscopes; that we should expect little, for what we expect will not come to pass. Revolutions, reformations, — those vast movements into which heroes and saints have flung themselves, in the belief that they were the dawn of the millennium, — have not borne the fruit which they looked for. Millenniums are still far away. These great convulsions leave the world changed, — perhaps improved, but not improved as the actors in them hoped it would be. Luther would have gone to work with less heart, could he have foreseen the Thirty Years War, and in the distance the theology of Tübingen. Washington might have hesitated to draw the sword against England, could he have seen the country which he made as we see it now.[1]

The most reasonable anticipations fail us, antecedents the most opposite mislead us, because the conditions of human problems never repeat themselves. Some new feature alters everything, — some element which we detect only in its after operation.

But this, it may be said, is but a meagre outcome. Can the long records of humanity, with all its joys and sorrows, its sufferings and its conquests, teach us no more than this? Let us approach the subject from another side.

If you were asked to point out the special feature in which Shakespeare's plays are so transcendently excellent, you would mention perhaps, among others, this, — that his stories are not

[1] February, 1864.

put together, and his characters are not conceived, to illustrate any particular law or principle. They teach many lessons, but not any one prominent above another; and, when we have drawn from them all the direct instruction which they contain, there remains still something unresolved, — something which the artist gives, and which the philosopher cannot give.

It is in this characteristic that we are accustomed to say Shakespeare's supreme *truth* lies. He represents real life. His dramas teach as life teaches, — neither less nor more. He builds his fabrics, as Nature does, on right and wrong; but he does not struggle to make Nature more systematic than she is. In the subtle interflow of good and evil; in the unmerited sufferings of innocence; in the disproportion of penalties to desert; in the seeming blindness with which justice, in attempting to assert itself, overwhelms innocent and guilty in common ruin, — Shakespeare is true to real experience. The mystery of life he leaves as he finds it; and, in his most tremendous positions, he is addressing rather the intellectual emotions than the understanding, — knowing well that the understanding in such things is at fault, and the sage as ignorant as the child.

Only the highest order of genius can represent Nature thus. An inferior artist produces either something entirely immoral, where good and evil are names, and nobility of disposition is supposed to show itself in the absolute disregard of them, or else, if he is a better kind of man, he will force on Nature a didactic purpose; he composes what are called moral tales, which may edify the conscience, but only mislead the intellect.

The finest work of this kind produced in modern times is Lessing's play of "Nathan the Wise." The object of it is to teach religious toleration. The doctrine is admirable, the mode in which it is enforced is interesting; but it has the fatal fault that it is not true. Nature does not teach religious toleration by any such direct method; and the result is — no one knew it better than Lessing himself — that the play is not poetry,

but only splendid manufacture. Shakespeare is eternal; Lessing's "Nathan" will pass away with the mode of thought which gave it birth. One based on fact; the other, on human theory about fact. The theory seems at first sight to contain the most immediate instruction; but it is not really so.

Cibber and others, as you know, wanted to alter Shakespeare. The French king, in "Lear," was to be got rid of; Cordelia was to marry Edgar, and Lear himself was to be rewarded for his sufferings by a golden old age. They could not bear that Hamlet should suffer for the sins of Claudius. The wicked king was to die, and the wicked mother; and Hamlet and Ophelia were to make a match of it, and live happily ever after. A common novelist would have arranged it thus; and you would have had your comfortable moral that wickedness was fitly punished, and virtue had its due reward, and all would have been well. But Shakespeare would not have it so. Shakespeare knew that crime was not so simple in its consequences, or Providence so paternal. He was contented to take the truth from life; and the effect upon the mind of the most correct theory of what life ought to be, compared to the effect of the life itself, is infinitesimal in comparison.

Again, let us compare the popular historical treatment of remarkable incidents with Shakespeare's treatment of them. Look at "Macbeth." You may derive abundant instruction from it, — instruction of many kinds. There is a moral lesson of profound interest in the steps by which a noble nature glides to perdition. In more modern fashion you may speculate, if you like, on the political conditions represented there, and the temptation presented in absolute monarchies to unscrupulous ambition; you may say, like Doctor Slop, these things could not have happened under a constitutional government: or, again, you may take up your parable against superstition; you may dilate on the frightful consequences of a belief in witches, and reflect on the superior advantages of an age of schools

and newspapers. If the bare facts of the story had come down to us from a chronicler, and an ordinary writer of the nineteenth century had undertaken to relate them, his account, we may depend upon it, would have been put together upon one or other of these principles. Yet, by the side of that unfolding of the secrets of the prison-house of the soul, what lean and shriveled anatomies the best of such descriptions would seem!

Shakespeare himself, I suppose, could not have given us a theory of what he meant; he gave us the thing itself, on which we might make whatever theories we please.

Or, again, look at Homer.

The "Iliad" is from two to three thousand years older than "Macbeth," and yet it is as fresh as if it had been written yesterday. We have there no lesson save in the emotions which rise in us as we read. Homer had no philosophy; he never struggles to press upon us his views about this or that; you can scarcely tell, indeed, whether his sympathies are Greek or Trojan: but he represents to us faithfully the men and women among whom he lived. He sang the tale of Troy, he touched his lyre, he drained the golden beaker in the halls of men like those on whom he was conferring immortality. And thus, although no Agamemnon, king of men, ever led a Grecian fleet to Ilium; though no Priam sought the midnight tent of Achilles; though Ulysses and Diomed and Nestor were but names, and Helen but a dream, yet, through Homer's power of representing men and women, those old Greeks will still stand out from amidst the darkness of the ancient world with a sharpness of outline which belongs to no period of history except the most recent. For the mere hard purposes of history, the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are the most effective books which ever were written. We see the hall of Menelaus, we see the garden of Alcinous, we see Nausicaa among her maidens on the shore, we see the mellow monarch sitting with ivory sceptre in the market-place dealing out genial justice. Or, again, when the wild mood is on, we can

hear the crash of the spears, the rattle of the armor as the heroes fall, and the plunging of the horses among the slain. Could we enter the palace of an old Ionian lord, we know what we should see there; we know the words in which he would address us. We could meet Hector as a friend. If we could choose a companion to spend an evening with over a fireside, it would be the man of many counsels, the husband of Penelope.

I am not going into the vexed question whether History or Poetry is the more true. It has been sometimes said that Poetry is the more true, because it can make things more like what our moral sense would prefer they should be. We hear of poetic justice and the like, as if nature and fact were not just enough.

I entirely dissent from that view. So far as Poetry attempts to improve on truth in that way, so far it abandons truth, and is false to itself. Even literal facts, exactly as they were, a great poet will prefer whenever he can get them. Shakespeare in the historical plays is studious, wherever possible, to give the very words which he finds to have been used; and it shows how wisely he was guided in this, that those magnificent speeches of Wolsey are taken exactly, with no more change than the metre makes necessary, from Cavendish's Life. Marlborough read Shakespeare for English history, and read nothing else. The poet only is not bound, when it is inconvenient, to what may be called the accidents of facts. It was enough for Shakespeare to know that Price Hal in his youth had lived among loose companions, and the tavern in Eastcheap came in to fill out his picture; although Mrs. Quickly and Falstaff, and Poins and Bardolph, were more likely to have been fallen in with by Shakespeare himself at the Mermaid, than to have been comrades of the true Prince Henry. It was enough for Shakespeare to draw real men, and the situation, whatever it might be, would sit easy on them. In this sense only it is that Poetry is truer than History, — that it can make a picture more complete. It may take liberties with time and space, and give the action

distinctness by throwing it into more manageable compass. But it may not alter the real conditions of things, or represent life as other than it is. The greatness of the poet depends on his being true to Nature, without insisting that Nature shall theorize with him, without making her more just, more philosophical, more moral than reality; and, in difficult matters, leaving much to reflection which cannot be explained.

And if this be true of Poetry — if Homer and Shakespeare are what they are from the absence of everything didactic about them — may we not thus learn something of what History should be, and what sense it should aspire to teach?

If Poetry must not theorize, much less should the historian theorize, whose obligations to be true to fact are even greater than the poet's. If the drama is grandest when the action is least explicable by laws, because then it best resembles life, then history will be grandest also under the same conditions. "Macbeth," were it literally true, would be perfect history; and so far as the historian can approach to that kind of model, so far as he can let his story tell itself in the deeds and words of those who act it out, so far is he most successful. His work is no longer the vapor of his own brain, which a breath will scatter; it is the thing itself, which will have interest for all time. A thousand theories may be formed about it, — spiritual theories, Pantheistic theories, cause and effect theories; but each age will have its own philosophy of history, and all these in turn will fail and die. Hegel falls out of date, Schlegel falls out of date, and Comte in good time will fall out of date; the thought about the thing must change as we change: but the thing itself can never change; and a history is durable or perishable as it contains more or least of the writer's own speculations. The splendid intellect of Gibbon for the most part kept him true to the right course in this; yet the philosophical chapters for which he has been most admired or censured may hereafter be thought the least interesting in his work. The time has been

when they would not have been comprehended: the time may come when they will seem commonplace.

It may be said, that, in requiring history to be written like a drama, we require an impossibility.

For history to be written with the complete form of a drama, doubtless is impossible: but there are periods, and these the periods, for the most part, of greatest interest to mankind, the history of which may be so written that the actors shall reveal their characters in their own words; where mind can be seen matched against mind, and the great passions of the epoch not simply be described as existing, but be exhibited at their white heat in the souls and hearts possessed by them. There are all the elements of drama — drama of the highest order — where the huge forces of the times are as the Grecian destiny, and the power of the man is seen either stemming the stream till it overwhelms him, or ruling while he seems to yield to it.

It is Nature's drama, — not Shakespeare's, but a drama none the less.

So at least it seems to me. Wherever possible, let us not be told *about* this man or that. Let us hear the man himself speak, let us see him act, and let us be left to form our own opinions about him. The historian, we are told, must not leave his readers to themselves. He must not only lay the facts before them: he must tell them what he himself thinks about those facts. In my opinion, this is precisely what he ought not to do. Bishop Butler says somewhere, that the best book which could be written would be a book consisting only of premises, from which the readers should draw conclusions for themselves. The highest poetry is the very thing which Butler requires, and the highest history ought to be. We should no more ask for a theory of this or that period of history, than we should ask for a theory of "Macbeth" or "Hamlet." Philosophies of history, sciences of history, — all these there will continue to be; the fashions of them will change, as our habits of thought will

change; each new philosopher will find his chief employment in showing that before him no one understood anything; but the drama of history is imperishable, and the lessons of it will be like what we learn from Homer or Shakespeare, — lessons for which we have no words.

The address of history is less to the understanding than to the higher emotions. We learn in it to sympathize with what is great and good; we learn to hate what is base. In the anomalies of fortune we feel the mystery of our mortal existence; and in the companionship of the illustrious natures who have shaped the fortunes of the world, we escape from the littlenesses which cling to the round of common life, and our minds are tuned in a higher and nobler key.

For the rest, and for those large questions which I touched in connection with Mr. Buckle, we live in times of disintegration, and none can tell what will be after us. What opinions, what convictions, the infant of to-day will find prevailing on the earth, if he and it live out together to the middle of another century, only a very bold man would undertake to conjecture. "The time will come," said Lichtenberg, in scorn at the materializing tendencies of modern thought, — "the time will come when the belief in God will be as the tales with which old women frightened children; when the world will be a machine, ether a gas, and God will be a force." Mankind, if they last long enough on the earth, may develop strange things out of themselves; and the growth of what is called the Positive Philosophy is a curious commentary on Lichtenberg's prophecy. But whether the end be seventy years hence or seven hundred, — be the close of the mortal history of humanity as far distant in the future as its shadowy beginnings seem now to lie behind us, — this only we may foretell with confidence, — that the riddle of man's nature will remain unsolved. There will be that in him yet which physical laws will fail to explain, — that something, whatever it be, in himself and in the world, which science

cannot fathom, and which suggests the unknown possibilities of his origin and his destiny. There will remain yet

> "Those obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things;
> Falling from us, vanishings;
> Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized;
> High instincts, before which our mortal nature
> Doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

There will remain

> "Those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain-light of all our day, —
> Are yet the master-light of all our seeing, —
> Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the Eternal Silence."

HISTORY

Thomas Babington Macaulay

(1800–1859)

[The career of Thomas Babington Macaulay as statesman and historian, orator and essayist, was equally brilliant, fortunate, and popular. An announcement of a new essay by Macaulay in the *Edinburgh Review* set all London agog with interest; the news in the House of Commons that Macaulay was to speak operated like a trumpet call. Yet he set little store by either his speeches or his essays; the great desire and design of his life was to win fame as an historian, to write history as it had never been written before. It is with Macaulay the historian that we are here concerned.

Fired with enthusiasm by Scott's historical romances, the young Macaulay, not yet thirty, elaborated in this essay entitled *History* (1828) the dramatic conception of historical writing which, twenty years later, was to find embodiment in his fascinating account of the reigns of James II and William III. To bring before us the form and color of the past, Macaulay would introduce those poetical or romantic elements of the imagination which the scientific historian, guided solely by pure reason, scornfully rejects. He would individualize a person or a scene by selected concreteness, he would vivify it by range of appeal to the five senses, and he would endow a telling event with action and suspense. He would write a history which would "in a few days, supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." And he did so. Sober historians have accused him of "a want of generalized and synthetic views," critics of literature have stigmatized his style as "metallic," "too self-confident," wanting "gradation and benignity." But Macaulay still manages to hold a very respectable place not merely in literature but in history. For the anæmic writer no tonic can be of more immediate efficacy than Macaulay's compound of vivifying concreteness, parallel structure, antithesis, and massing of detail. And for the general reader, probably no other English historian has such power to resuscitate the men and manners of the past. As his most recent critic says, "one sees the map of England come alive and march and mix under the eye."]

To write history respectably — that is, to abbreviate despatches, and make extracts from speeches, to intersperse in due propor-

tion epithets of praise and abhorrence, to draw up antithetical characters of great men, setting forth how many contradictory virtues and vices they united, and abounding in *withs* and *withouts* — all this is very easy. But to be a really great historian is perhaps the rarest of intellectual distinctions. Many scientific works are, in their kind, absolutely perfect. There are poems which we should be inclined to designate as faultless, or as disfigured only by blemishes which pass unnoticed in the general blaze of excellence. There are speeches, some speeches of Demosthenes particularly, in which it would be impossible to alter a word without altering it for the worse. But we are acquainted with no history which approaches to our notion of what a history ought to be — with no history which does not widely depart, either on the right hand or on the left, from the exact line.

The cause may easily be assigned. This province of literature is a debatable land. It lies on the confines of two distinct territories. It is under the jurisdiction of two hostile powers; and, like other districts similarly situated, it is ill defined, ill cultivated, and ill regulated. Instead of being equally shared between its two rulers, the Reason and the Imagination, it falls alternately under the sole and absolute dominion of each. It is sometimes fiction. It is sometimes theory.

History, it has been said, is philosophy teaching by examples. Unhappily, what the philosophy gains in soundness and depth the examples generally lose in vividness. A perfect historian must possess an imagination sufficiently powerful to make his narrative affecting and picturesque. Yet he must control it so absolutely as to content himself with the materials which he finds, and to refrain from supplying deficiencies by additions of his own. He must be a profound and ingenious reasoner. Yet he must possess sufficient self-command to abstain from casting his facts in the mould of his hypothesis. Those who can justly estimate these almost insuperable difficulties, will not think it

strange that every writer should have failed, either in the narrative or in the speculative department of history.

It may be laid down as a general rule, though subject to considerable qualifications and exceptions, that history begins in novel and ends in essay. Of the romantic historians Herodotus is the earliest and the best. His animation, his simple-hearted tenderness, his wonderful talent for description and dialogue, and the pure sweet flow of his language, place him at the head of narrators. He reminds us of a delightful child. There is a grace beyond the reach of affectation in his awkwardness, a malice in his innocence, an intelligence in his nonsense, an insinuating eloquence in his lisp. We know of no writer who makes such interest for himself and his book in the heart of the reader. At the distance of three-and-twenty centuries, we feel for him the same sort of pitying fondness which Fontaine and Gay are said to have inspired in society. He has written an incomparable book. He has written something better perhaps than the best history; but he has not written a good history; he is, from the first to the last chapter, an inventor. We do not here refer merely to those gross fictions with which he has been reproached by the critics of later times. We speak of that colouring which is equally diffused over his whole narrative, and which perpetually leaves the most sagacious reader in doubt what to reject and what to receive. The most authentic parts of his work bear the same relation to his wildest legends which Henry the Fifth bears to the Tempest. There was an expedition undertaken by Xerxes against Greece; and there was an invasion of France. There was a battle at Platæa; and there was a battle at Agincourt. Cambridge and Exeter, the Constable and the Dauphin, were persons as real as Demaratus and Pausanias. The harangue of the Archbishop on the Salic Law and the Book of Numbers differs much less from the orations which have in all ages proceeded from the right reverend bench than the speeches of Mardonius and Artabanus from those

which were delivered at the council-board of Susa. Shakspeare gives us enumerations of armies, and returns of killed and wounded, which are not, we suspect, much less accurate than those of Herodotus. There are passages in Herodotus nearly as long as acts of Shakspeare, in which everything is told dramatically, and in which the narrative serves only the purpose of stage-directions. It is possible, no doubt, that the substance of some real conversations may have been reported to the historian. But events which, if they ever happened, happened in ages and nations so remote that the particulars could never have been known to him, are related with the greatest minuteness of detail. We have all that Candaules said to Gyges, and all that passed between Astyages and Harpagus. We are, therefore, unable to judge whether, in the account which he gives of transactions respecting which he might possibly have been well informed, we can trust to anything beyond the naked outline; whether, for example, the answer of Gelon to the ambassadors of the Grecian confederacy, or the expressions which passed between Aristides and Themistocles at their famous interview, have been correctly transmitted to us. The great events are, no doubt, faithfully related. So, probably, are many of the slighter circumstances; but which of them it is impossible to ascertain. The fictions are so much like the facts, and the facts so much like the fictions, that, with respect to many most interesting particulars, our belief is neither given nor withheld, but remains in an uneasy and interminable state of abeyance. We know that there is truth; but we cannot exactly decide where it lies.

The faults of Herodotus are the faults of a simple and imaginative mind. Children and servants are remarkably Herodotean in their style of narration. They tell everything dramatically. Their *says hes* and *says shes* are proverbial. Every person who has had to settle their disputes knows that, even when they have no intention to deceive, their reports of conversation always

require to be carefully sifted. If an educated man were giving an account of the late change of administration, he would say — "Lord Goderich resigned; and the King, in consequence, sent for the Duke of Wellington." A porter tells the story as if he had been hid behind the curtains of the royal bed at Windsor: "So Lord Goderich says, 'I cannot manage this business; I must go out.' So the King says, — says he, 'Well, then, I must send for the Duke of Wellington — that's all.'" This is in the very manner of the father of history.

Herodotus wrote as it was natural that he should write. He wrote for a nation susceptible, curious, lively, insatiably desirous of novelty and excitement; for a nation in which the fine arts had attained their highest excellence, but in which philosophy was still in its infancy. His countrymen had but recently begun to cultivate prose composition. Public transactions had generally been recorded in verse. The first historians might, therefore, indulge without fear of censure in the licence allowed to their predecessors the bards. Books were few. The events of former times were learned from tradition and from popular ballads; the manners of foreign countries from the reports of travellers. It is well known that the mystery which overhangs what is distant, either in space or time, frequently prevents us from censuring as unnatural what we perceive to be impossible. We stare at a dragoon who has killed three French cuirassiers, as a prodigy; yet we read, without the least disgust, how Godfrey slew his thousands, and Rinaldo his ten thousands. Within the last hundred years, stories about China and Bantam, which ought not to have imposed on an old nurse, were gravely laid down as foundations of political theories by eminent philosophers. What the time of the Crusades is to us, the generation of Crœsus and Solon was to the Greeks of the time of Herodotus. Babylon was to them what Pekin was to the French academicians of the last century.

For such a people was the book of Herodotus composed; and,

if we may trust to a report, not sanctioned indeed by writers of high authority, but in itself not improbable, it was composed, not to be read, but to be heard. It was not to the slow circulation of a few copies, which the rich only could possess, that the aspiring author looked for his reward. The great Olympian festival, — the solemnity which collected multitudes, proud of the Grecian name, from the wildest mountains of Doris, and the remotest colonies of Italy and Libya, — was to witness his triumph. The interest of the narrative, and the beauty of the style, were aided by the imposing effect of recitation, — by the splendour of the spectacle, — by the powerful influence of sympathy. A critic who could have asked for authorities in the midst of such a scene must have been of a cold and sceptical nature; and few such critics were there. As was the historian, such were the auditors, — inquisitive, credulous, easily moved by religious awe or patriotic enthusiasm. They were the very men to hear with delight of strange beasts, and birds, and trees, — of dwarfs, and giants, and cannibals — of gods, whose very names it was impiety to utter, — of ancient dynasties, which had left behind them monuments surpassing all the works of later times, — of towns like provinces, — of rivers like seas, — of stupendous walls, and temples, and pyramids, — of the rites which the Magi performed at daybreak on the tops of the mountains, — of the secrets inscribed on the eternal obelisks of Memphis. With equal delight they would have listened to the graceful romances of their own country. They now heard of the exact accomplishment of obscure predictions, of the punishment of crimes over which the justice of heaven had seemed to slumber, — of dreams, omens, warnings from the dead, — of princesses, for whom noble suitors contended in every generous exercise of strength and skill, — of infants, strangely preserved from the dagger of the assassin, to fulfil high destinies.

As the narrative approached their own times, the interest

became still more absorbing. The chronicler had now to tell the story of that great conflict from which Europe dates its intellectual and political supremacy, — a story which, even at this distance of time, is the most marvellous and the most touching in the annals of the human race, — a story abounding with all that is wild and wonderful, with all that is pathetic and animating; with the gigantic caprices of infinite wealth and despotic power — with the mightier miracles of wisdom, of virtue, and of courage. He told them of rivers dried up in a day, — of provinces famished for a meal, — of a passage for ships hewn through the mountains, — of a road for armies spread upon the waves, — of monarchies and commonwealths swept away, — of anxiety, of terror, of confusion, of despair! — and then of proud and stubborn hearts tried in that extremity of evil, and not found wanting, — of resistance long maintained against desperate odds, — of lives dearly sold, when resistance could be maintained no more, — of signal deliverance, and of unsparing revenge. Whatever gave a stronger air of reality to a narrative so well calculated to inflame the passions, and to flatter national pride, was certain to be favourably received.

Between the time at which Herodotus is said to have composed his history, and the close of the Peloponnesian war, about forty years elapsed, — forty years, crowded with great military and political events. The circumstances of that period produced a great effect on the Grecian character; and nowhere was this effect so remarkable as in the illustrious democracy of Athens. An Athenian, indeed, even in the time of Herodotus, would scarcely have written a book so romantic and garrulous as that of Herodotus. As civilisation advanced, the citizens of that famous republic became still less visionary, and still less simple-hearted. They aspired to know where their ancestors had been content to doubt; they began to doubt where their ancestors had thought it their duty to believe. Aristophanes is fond of alluding to this change in the temper of his countrymen.

The father and son, in the Clouds, are evidently representatives of the generations to which they respectively belonged. Nothing more clearly illustrates the nature of this moral revolution than the change which passed upon tragedy. The wild sublimity of Æschylus became the scoff of every young Phidippides. Lectures on abstruse points of philosophy, the fine distinctions of casuistry, and the dazzling fence of rhetoric, were substituted for poetry. The language lost something of that infantine sweetness which had characterised it. It became less like the ancient Tuscan, and more like the modern French.

The fashionable logic of the Greeks was, indeed, far from strict. Logic never can be strict where books are scarce, and where information is conveyed orally. We are all aware how frequently fallacies, which, when set down on paper, are at once detected, pass for unanswerable arguments when dexterously and volubly urged in Parliament, at the bar, or in private conversation. The reason is evident. We cannot inspect them closely enough to perceive their inaccuracy. We cannot readily compare them with each other. We lose sight of one part of the subject before another, which ought to be received in connection with it, comes before us; and as there is no immutable record of what has been admitted and of what has been denied, direct contradictions pass muster with little difficulty. Almost all the education of a Greek consisted in talking and listening. His opinions on government were picked up in the debates of the assembly. If he wished to study metaphysics, instead of shutting himself up with a book, he walked down to the market-place to look for a sophist. So completely were men formed to these habits, that even writing acquired a conversational air. The philosophers adopted the form of dialogue, as the most natural mode of communicating knowledge. Their reasonings have the merits and the defects which belong to that species of composition, and are characterised rather by quickness and subtlety than by depth and precision. Truth is exhibited in parts, and by glimpses.

Innumerable clever hints are given; but no sound and durable system is erected. The *argumentum ad hominem*, a kind of argument most efficacious in debate, but utterly useless for the investigation of general principles, is among their favourite resources. Hence, though nothing can be more admirable than the skill which Socrates displays in the conversations which Plato has reported or invented, his victories, for the most part, seem to us unprofitable. A trophy is set up; but no new province is added to the dominions of the human mind.

Still, where thousands of keen and ready intellects were constantly employed in speculating on the qualities of actions and on the principles of government, it was impossible that history should retain its whole character. It became less gossiping and less picturesque; but much more accurate, and somewhat more scientific.

The history of Thucydides differs from that of Herodotus as a portrait differs from the representation of an imaginary scene; as the Burke or Fox of Reynolds differs from his Ugolino or his Beaufort. In the former case, the archetype is given: in the latter it is created. The faculties which are required for the latter purpose are of a higher and rarer order than those which suffice for the former, and indeed necessarily comprise them. He who is able to paint what he sees with the eye of the mind will surely be able to paint what he sees with the eye of the body. He who can invent a story, and tell it well, will also be able to tell, in an interesting manner, a story which he has not invented. If, in practice, some of the best writers of fiction have been among the worst writers of history, it has been because one of their talents had merged in another so completely that it could not be severed; because, having long been habituated to invent and narrate at the same time, they found it impossible to narrate without inventing.

Some capricious and discontented artists have affected to consider portrait-painting as unworthy of a man of genius. Some

critics have spoken in the same contemptuous manner of history. Johnson puts the case thus: The historian tells either what is false or what is true: in the former case he is no historian: in the latter he has no opportunity for displaying his abilities: for truth is one: and all who tell the truth must tell it alike.

It is not difficult to elude both the horns of this dilemma. We will recur to the analogous art of portrait painting. Any man with eyes and hands may be taught to take a likeness. The process, up to a certain point, is merely mechanical. If this were all, a man of talents might justly despise the occupation. But we could mention portraits which are resemblances, — but not mere resemblances; faithful, — but much more than faithful; portraits which condense into one point of time, and exhibit, at a single glance, the whole history of turbid and eventful lives — in which the eye seems to scrutinise us, and the mouth to command us — in which the brow menaces, and the lip almost quivers with scorn — in which every wrinkle is a comment on some important transaction. The account which Thucydides has given of the retreat from Syracuse is, among narratives, what Vandyke's Lord Strafford is among paintings.

Diversity, it is said, implies error: truth is one, and admits of no degrees. We answer, that this principle holds good only in abstract reasonings. When we talk of the truth of imitation in the fine arts, we mean an imperfect and a graduated truth. No picture is exactly like the original; nor is a picture good in proportion as it is like the original. When Sir Thomas Lawrence paints a handsome peeress, he does not contemplate her through a powerful microscope, and transfer to the canvas the pores of the skin, the blood-vessels of the eye, and all the other beauties which Gulliver discovered in the Brobdignaggian maids of honour. If he were to do this, the effect would not merely be unpleasant, but, unless the scale of the picture were proportionably enlarged, would be absolutely *false*. And, after all, a microscope of greater power than that which he had employed

would convict him of innumerable omissions. The same may be said of history. Perfectly and absolutely true it cannot be: for, to be perfectly and absolutely true, it ought to record *all* the slightest particulars of the slightest transactions — all the things done and all the words uttered during the time of which it treats. The omission of any circumstance, however insignificant, would be a defect. If history were written thus, the Bodleian Library would not contain the occurrences of a week. What is told in the fullest and most accurate annals bears an infinitely small proportion to what is suppressed. The difference between the copious work of Clarendon and the account of the civil wars in the abridgment of Goldsmith vanishes when compared with the immense mass of facts respecting which both are equally silent.

No picture, then, and no history, can present us with the whole truth: but those are the best pictures and the best histories which exhibit such parts of the truth as most nearly produce the effect of the whole. He who is deficient in the art of selection may, by showing nothing but the truth, produce all the effect of the grossest falsehood. It perpetually happens that one writer tells less truth than another, merely because he tells more truths. In the imitative arts we constantly see this. There are lines in the human face, and objects in landscape, which stand in such relations to each other, that they ought either to be all introduced into a painting together or all omitted together. A sketch into which none of them enters may be excellent; but, if some are given and others left out, though there are more points of likeness, there is less likeness. An outline scrawled with a pen, which seizes the marked features of a countenance, will give a much stronger idea of it than a bad painting in oils. Yet the worst painting in oils that ever hung at Somerset House resembles the original in many more particulars. A bust of white marble may give an excellent idea of a blooming face. Colour the lips and cheeks of the bust, leaving

the hair and eyes unaltered, and the similarity, instead of being more striking, will be less so.

History has its foreground and its background: and it is principally in the management of its perspective that one artist differs from another. Some events must be represented on a large scale, others diminished; the great majority will be lost in the dimness of the horizon; and a general idea of their joint effect will be given by a few slight touches.

In this respect no writer has ever equalled Thucydides. He was a perfect master of the art of gradual diminution. His history is sometimes as concise as a chronological chart; yet it is always perspicuous. It is sometimes as minute as one of Lovelace's letters; yet it is never prolix. He never fails to contract and to expand it in the right place.

Thucydides borrowed from Herodotus the practice of putting speeches of his own into the mouths of his characters. In Herodotus this usage is scarcely censurable. It is of a piece with his whole manner. But it is altogether incongruous in the work of his successor, and violates, not only the accuracy of history, but the decencies of fiction. When once we enter into the spirit of Herodotus, we find no inconsistency. The conventional probability of his drama is preserved from the beginning to the end. The deliberate orations, and the familiar dialogues, are in strict keeping with each other. But the speeches of Thucydides are neither preceded nor followed by anything with which they harmonise. They give to the whole book something of the grotesque character of those Chinese pleasure-grounds in which perpendicular rocks of granite start up in the midst of a soft green plain. Invention is shocking where truth is in such close juxtaposition with it.

Thucydides honestly tells us that some of these discourses are purely fictitious. He may have reported the substance of others correctly, but it is clear from the internal evidence that he has preserved no more than the substance. His own peculiar

habits of thought and expression are everywhere discernible. Individual and national peculiarities are seldom to be traced in the sentiments, and never in the diction. The oratory of the Corinthians and Thebans is not less Attic, either in matter or in manner, than that of the Athenians. The style of Cleon is as pure, as austere, as terse, and as significant, as that of Pericles.

In spite of this great fault, it must be allowed that Thucydides has surpassed all his rivals in the art of historical narration, in the art of producing an effect on the imagination, by skilful selection and disposition, without indulging in the licence of invention. But narration, though an important part of the business of a historian, is not the whole. To append a moral to a work of fiction is either useless or superfluous. A fiction may give a more impressive effect to what is already known; but it can teach nothing new. If it presents to us characters and trains of events to which our experience furnishes us with nothing similar, instead of deriving instruction from it, we pronounce it unnatural. We do not form our opinions from it; but we try it by our preconceived opinions. Fiction, therefore, is essentially imitative. Its merit consists in its resemblance to a model with which we are already familiar, or to which at least we can instantly refer. Hence it is that the anecdotes which interest us most strongly in authentic narrative are offensive when introduced into novels; that what is called the romantic part of history is in fact the least romantic. It is delightful as history, because it contradicts our previous notions of human nature, and of the connection of causes and effects. It is, on that very account, shocking and incongruous in fiction. In fiction, the principles are given, to find the facts: in history, the facts are given, to find the principles; and the writer who does not explain the phenomena as well as state them, performs only one half of his office. Facts are the mere dross of history. It is from the abstract truth which interpenetrates them, and lies latent among them like gold in the ore, that the mass derives

its whole value: and the precious particles are generally combined with the baser in such a manner that the separation is a task of the utmost difficulty.

Here Thucydides is deficient: the deficiency, indeed, is not discreditable to him. It was the inevitable effect of circumstances. It was in the nature of things necessary that, in some part of its progress through political science, the human mind should reach that point which it attained in his time. Knowledge advances by steps, and not by leaps. The axioms of an English debating club would have been startling and mysterious paradoxes to the most enlightened statesmen of Athens. But it would be as absurd to speak contemptuously of the Athenian on this account as to ridicule Strabo for not having given us an account of Chili, or to talk of Ptolemy as we talk of Sir Richard Phillips. Still, when we wish for solid geographical information, we must prefer the solemn coxcombry of Pinkerton to the noble work of Strabo. If we wanted instruction respecting the solar system, we should consult the silliest girl from a boarding-school rather than Ptolemy.

Thucydides was undoubtedly a sagacious and reflecting man. This clearly appears from the ability with which he discusses practical questions. But the talent of deciding on the circumstances of a particular case is often possessed in the highest perfection by persons destitute of the power of generalisation. Men skilled in the military tactics of civilised nations have been amazed at the far-sightedness and penetration which a Mohawk displays in concerting his stratagems, or in discerning those of his enemies. In England, no class possesses so much of that peculiar ability which is required for constructing ingenious schemes, and for obviating remote difficulties, as the thieves and the thief-takers. Women have more of this dexterity than men. Lawyers have more of it than statesmen: statesmen have more of it than philosophers. Monk had more of it than Harrington and all his club. Walpole had more of it than Adam

Smith or Beccaria. Indeed, the species of discipline by which this dexterity is acquired tends to contract the mind, and to render it incapable of abstract reasoning.

The Grecian statesmen of the age of Thucydides were distinguished by their practical sagacity, their insight into motives, their skill in devising means for the attainment of their ends. A state of society in which the rich were constantly planning the oppression of the poor, and the poor the spoliation of the rich, in which the ties of party had superseded those of country, in which revolutions and counter-revolutions were events of daily occurrence, was naturally prolific in desperate and crafty political adventurers. This was the very school in which men were likely to acquire the dissimulation of Mazarin, the judicious temerity of Richelieu, the penetration, the exquisite tact, the almost instinctive presentiment of approaching events which gave so much authority to the counsel of Shaftesbury, that "it was as if a man had inquired of the oracle of God." In this school Thucydides studied; and his wisdom is that which such a school would naturally afford. He judges better of circumstances than of principles. The more a question is narrowed, the better he reasons upon it. His work suggests many most important considerations respecting the first principles of government and morals, the growth of factions, the organisation of armies, and the mutual relations of communities. Yet all his general observations on these subjects are very superficial. His most judicious remarks differ from the remarks of a really philosophical historian, as a sum correctly cast up by a bookkeeper from a general expression discovered by an algebraist. The former is useful only in a single transaction; the latter may be applied to an infinite number of cases.

This opinion will, we fear, be considered as heterodox. For, not to speak of the illusion which the sight of a Greek type, or the sound of a Greek diphthong, often produces, there are some peculiarities in the manner of Thucydides which in no small

degree have tended to secure to him the reputation of profundity. His book is evidently the book of a man and a statesman; and in this respect presents a remarkable contrast to the delightful childishness of Herodotus. Throughout it there is an air of matured power, of grave and melancholy reflection, of impartiality and habitual self-command. His feelings are rarely indulged, and speedily repressed. Vulgar prejudices of every kind, and particularly vulgar superstitions, he treats with a cold and sober disdain peculiar to himself. His style is weighty, condensed, antithetical, and not unfrequently obscure. But, when we look at his political philosophy, without regard to these circumstances, we find him to have been, what indeed it would have been a miracle if he had not been, simply an Athenian of the fifth century before Christ.

Xenophon is commonly placed, but we think without much reason, in the same rank with Herodotus and Thucydides. He resembles them, indeed, in the purity and sweetness of his style; but in spirit he rather resembles that later school of historians whose works seem to be fables composed for a moral, and who, in their eagerness to give us warnings and examples, forget to give us men and women. The Life of Cyrus, whether we look upon it as a history or as a romance, seems to us a very wretched performance. The Expedition of the Ten Thousand, and the History of Grecian Affairs, are certainly pleasant reading; but they indicate no great power of mind. In truth, Xenophon, though his taste was elegant, his disposition amiable, and his intercourse with the world extensive, had, we suspect, rather a weak head. Such was evidently the opinion of that extraordinary man to whom he early attached himself, and for whose memory he entertained an idolatrous veneration. He came in only for the milk with which Socrates nourished his babes in philosophy. A few saws of morality, and a few of the simplest doctrines of natural religion, were enough for the good young man. The strong meat, the bold speculations on physical and

metaphysical science, were reserved for auditors of a different description. Even the lawless habits of a captain of mercenary troops could not change the tendency which the character of Xenophon early acquired. To the last, he seems to have retained a sort of heathen Puritanism. The sentiments of piety and virtue which abound in his works are those of a well-meaning man, somewhat timid and narrow-minded, devout from constitution rather than from rational conviction. He was as superstitious as Herodotus, but in a way far more offensive. The very peculiarities which charm us in an infant, the toothless mumbling, the stammering, the tottering, the helplessness, the causeless tears and laughter, are disgusting in old age. In the same manner, the absurdity which precedes a period of general intelligence is often pleasing; that which follows it is contemptible. The nonsense of Herodotus is that of a baby. The nonsense of Xenophon is that of a dotard. His stories about dreams, omens, and prophecies, present a strange contrast to the passages in which the shrewd and incredulous Thucydides mentions the popular superstitions. It is not quite clear that Xenophon was honest in his credulity; his fanaticism was in some degree politic. He would have made an excellent member of the Apostolic Camarilla. An alarmist by nature, an aristocrat by party, he carried to an unreasonable excess his horror of popular turbulence. The quiet atrocity of Sparta did not shock him in the same manner; for he hated tumult more than crimes. He was desirous to find restraints which might curb the passions of the multitude; and he absurdly fancied that he had found them in a religion without evidence or sanction, precepts or example, in a frigid system of Theophilanthropy, supported by nursery tales.

Polybius and Arrian have given us authentic accounts of facts; and here their merit ends. They were not men of comprehensive minds; they had not the art of telling a story in an interesting manner. They have in consequence been thrown into the shade

by writers who, though less studious of truth than themselves, understood far better the art of producing effect, — by Livy and Quintus Curtius.

Yet Polybius and Arrian deserve high praise when compared with the writers of that school of which Plutarch may be considered as the head. For the historians of this class we must confess that we entertain a peculiar aversion. They seem to have been pedants, who, though destitute of those valuable qualities which are frequently found in conjunction with pedantry, thought themselves great philosophers and great politicians. They not only mislead their readers in every page, as to particular facts, but they appear to have altogether misconceived the whole character of the times of which they write. They were inhabitants of an empire bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Euphrates, by the ice of Scythia and the sands of Mauritania; composed of nations whose manners, whose languages, whose religion, whose countenances and complexions, were widely different; governed by one mighty despotism, which had risen on the ruins of a thousand commonwealths and kingdoms. Of liberty, such as it is in small democracies, of patriotism, such as it is in small independent communities of any kind, they had, and they could have, no experimental knowledge. But they had read of men who exerted themselves in the cause of their country with an energy unknown in later times, who had violated the dearest of domestic charities, or voluntarily devoted themselves to death for the public good; and they wondered at the degeneracy of their contemporaries. It never occurred to them that the feelings which they so greatly admired sprung from local and occasional causes; that they will always grow up spontaneously in small societies; and that, in large empires, though they may be forced into existence for a short time by peculiar circumstances, they cannot be general or permanent. It is impossible that any man should feel for a fortress on a remote frontier as he feels for his own house; that he should

grieve for a defeat in which ten thousand people whom he never saw have fallen as he grieves for a defeat which has half unpeopled the street in which he lives; that he should leave his home for a military expedition in order to preserve the balance of power, as cheerfully as he would leave it to repel invaders who had begun to burn all the corn-fields in his neighbourhood.

The writers of whom we speak should have considered this. They should have considered that in patriotism, such as it existed amongst the Greeks, there was nothing essentially and eternally good; that an exclusive attachment to a particular society, though a natural, and, under certain restrictions, a most useful sentiment, implies no extraordinary attainments in wisdom or virtue; that, where it has existed in an intense degree, it has turned states into gangs of robbers whom their mutual fidelity has rendered more dangerous, has given a character of peculiar atrocity to war, and has generated that worst of all political evils, the tyranny of nations over nations.

Enthusiastically attached to the name of liberty, these historians troubled themselves little about its definition. The Spartans, tormented by ten thousand absurd restraints, unable to please themselves in the choice of their wives, their suppers, or their company, compelled to assume a peculiar manner, and to talk in a peculiar style, gloried in their liberty. The aristocracy of Rome repeatedly made liberty a plea for cutting off the favourites of the people. In almost all the little commonwealths of antiquity, liberty was used as a pretext for measures directed against everything which makes liberty valuable, for measures which stifled discussion, corrupted the administration of justice, and discouraged the accumulation of property. The writers, whose works we are considering, confounded the sound with the substance, and the means with the end. Their imaginations were inflamed by mystery. They conceived of liberty as monks conceive of love, as cockneys conceive of the happiness and innocence of rural life, as novel-reading sempstresses conceive

of Almack's and Grosvenor Square, accomplished Marquesses and handsome colonels of the Guards. In the relation of events, and the delineation of characters, they have paid little attention to facts, to the costume of the times of which they pretend to treat, or to the general principles of human nature. They have been faithful only to their own puerile and extravagant doctrines. Generals and statesmen are metamorphosed into magnanimous coxcombs, from whose fulsome virtues we turn away with disgust. The fine sayings and exploits of their heroes remind us of the insufferable perfections of Sir Charles Grandison, and affect us with a nausea similar to that which we feel when an actor, in one of Morton's or Kotzebue's plays, lays his hand on his heart, advances to the ground-lights, and mouths a moral sentence for the edification of the gods.

These writers, men who knew not what it was to have a country, men who had never enjoyed political rights, brought into fashion an offensive cant about patriotism and zeal for freedom. What the English Puritans did for the language of Christianity, what Scuderi did for the language of love, they did for the language of public spirit. By habitual exaggeration they made it mean. By monotonous emphasis they made it feeble. They abused it till it became scarcely possible to use it with effect.

Their ordinary rules of morality are deduced from extreme cases. The common regimen which they prescribe for society is made up of those desperate remedies which only its most desperate distempers require. They look with peculiar complacency on actions which even those who approve them consider as exceptions to laws of almost universal application — which bear so close an affinity to the most atrocious crimes that, even where it may be unjust to censure them, it is unsafe to praise them. It is not strange, therefore, that some flagitious instances of perfidy and cruelty should have been passed unchallenged in such company, that grave moralists, with no per-

sonal interest at stake, should have extolled, in the highest terms, deeds of which the atrocity appalled even the infuriated factions in whose cause they were perpetrated. The part which Timoleon took in the assassination of his brother shocked many of his own partisans. The recollection of it preyed long on his own mind. But it was reserved for historians who lived some centuries later to discover that his conduct was a glorious display of virtue, and to lament that, from the frailty of human nature, a man who could perform so great an exploit could repent of it.

The writings of these men, and of their modern imitators, have produced effects which deserve some notice. The English have been so long accustomed to political speculation, and have enjoyed so large a measure of practical liberty, that such works have produced little effect on their minds. We have classical associations and great names of our own which we can confidently oppose to the most splendid of ancient times. Senate has not to our ears a sound so venerable as Parliament. We respect the Great Charter more than the laws of Solon. The Capitol and the Forum impress us with less awe than our own Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey, the place where the great men of twenty generations have contended, the place where they sleep together! The list of warriors and statesmen by whom our constitution was founded or preserved, from De Montfort down to Fox, may well stand a comparison with the Fasti of Rome. The dying thanksgiving of Sidney is as noble as the libation which Thrasea poured to Liberating Jove: and we think with far less pleasure of Cato tearing out his entrails than of Russell saying, as he turned away from his wife, that the bitterness of death was past. Even those parts of our history over which, on some accounts, we would gladly throw a veil may be proudly opposed to those on which the moralists of antiquity loved most to dwell. The enemy of English liberty was not murdered by men whom he had pardoned and loaded

with benefits. He was not stabbed in the back by those who smiled and cringed before his face. He was vanquished on fields of stricken battle; he was arraigned, sentenced, and executed in the face of heaven and earth. Our liberty is neither Greek nor Roman; but essentially English. It has a character of its own, — a character which has taken a tinge from the sentiments of the chivalrous ages, and which accords with the peculiarities of our manners and of our insular situation. It has a language, too, of its own, and a language singularly idiomatic, full of meaning to ourselves, scarcely intelligible to strangers.

Here, therefore, the effect of books such as those which we have been considering has been harmless. They have, indeed, given currency to many very erroneous opinions with respect to ancient history. They have heated the imaginations of boys. They have misled the judgment and corrupted the taste of some men of letters, such as Akenside and Sir William Jones. But on persons engaged in public affairs they have had very little influence. The foundations of our constitution were laid by men who knew nothing of the Greeks but that they denied the orthodox procession and cheated the Crusaders; and nothing of Rome, but that the Pope lived there. Those who followed, contented themselves with improving on the original plan. They found models at home and therefore they did not look for them abroad. But, when enlightened men on the Continent began to think about political reformation, having no patterns before their eyes in their domestic history, they naturally had recourse to those remains of antiquity, the study of which is considered throughout Europe as an important part of education. The historians of whom we have been speaking had been members of large communities, and subjects of absolute sovereigns. Hence it is, as we have already said, that they commit such gross errors in speaking of the little republics of antiquity. Their works were now read in the spirit in which they had been written. They were read by men placed in circumstances closely resem-

bling their own, unacquainted with the real nature of liberty, but inclined to believe everything good which could be told respecting it. How powerfully these books impressed these speculative reformers is well known to all who have paid any attention to the French literature of the last century. But, perhaps, the writer on whom they produced the greatest effect was Vittorio Alfieri. In some of his plays, particularly in Virginia, Timoleon, and Brutus the Younger, he has even caricatured the extravagance of his masters.

It was not strange that the blind, thus led by the blind, should stumble. The transactions of the French Revolution, in some measure, took their character from these works. Without the assistance of these works, indeed, a revolution would have taken place, — a revolution productive of much good and much evil, tremendous but shortlived, evil dearly purchased, but durable good. But it would not have been exactly such a revolution. The style, the accessories, would have been in many respects different. There would have been less of bombast in language, less of affectation in manner, less of solemn trifling and ostentatious simplicity. The acts of legislative assemblies, and the correspondence of diplomatists, would not have been disgraced by rants worthy only of a college declamation. The government of a great and polished nation would not have rendered itself ridiculous by attempting to revive the usages of a world which had long passed away, or rather of a world which had never existed except in the description of a fantastic school of writers. These second-hand imitations resembled the originals about as much as the classical feast with which the Doctor in Peregrine Pickle turned the stomachs of all his guests resembled one of the suppers of Lucullus in the Hall of Apollo.

These were mere follies. But the spirit excited by these writers produced more serious effects. The greater part of the crimes which disgraced the revolution sprung indeed from the relaxation of law, from popular ignorance, from the remembrance

of past oppression, from the fear of foreign conquest, from rapacity, from ambition, from party-spirit. But many atrocious proceedings must, doubtless, be ascribed to heated imagination, to perverted principle, to a distaste for what was vulgar in morals, and a passion for what was startling and dubious. Mr. Burke has touched on this subject with great felicity of expression: "The gradation of their republic," says he, "is laid in moral paradoxes. All those instances to be found in history, whether real or fabulous, of a doubtful public spirit, at which morality is perplexed, reason is staggered, and from which affrighted nature recoils, are their chosen and almost sole examples for the instruction of their youth." This evil, we believe, is to be directly ascribed to the influence of the historians whom we have mentioned, and their modern imitators.

Livy had some faults in common with these writers. But on the whole he must be considered as forming a class by himself: no historian with whom we are acquainted has shown so complete an indifference to truth. He seems to have cared only about the picturesque effect of his book, and the honour of his country. On the other hand, we do not know, in the whole range of literature, an instance of a bad thing so well done. The painting of the narrative is beyond description vivid and graceful. The abundance of interesting sentiments and splendid imagery in the speeches is almost miraculous. His mind is a soil which is never over-teemed, a fountain which never seems to trickle. It pours forth profusely; yet it gives no sign of exhaustion. It was probably to this exuberance of thought and language, always fresh, always sweet, always pure, no sooner yielded than repaired, that the critics applied that expression which has been so much discussed *lactea ubertas*.

All the merits and all the defects of Livy take a colouring from the character of his nation. He was a writer peculiarly Roman; the proud citizen of a commonwealth which had indeed lost the reality of liberty, but which still sacredly preserved its

forms — in fact, the subject of an arbitrary prince, but in his own estimation one of the masters of the world, with a hundred kings below him, and only the gods above him. He, therefore, looked back on former times with feelings far different from those which were naturally entertained by his Greek contemporaries, and which at a later period became general among men of letters throughout the Roman Empire. He contemplated the past with interest and delight, not because it furnished a contrast to the present, but because it had led to the present. He recurred to it, not to lose in proud recollections the sense of national degradation, but to trace the progress of national glory. It is true that his veneration for antiquity produced on him some of the effects which it produced on those who arrived at it by a very different road. He has something of their exaggeration, something of their cant, something of their fondness for anomalies and *lusus naturæ* in morality. Yet even here we perceive a difference. They talk rapturously of patriotism and liberty in the abstract. He does not seem to think any country but Rome deserving of love; nor is it for liberty as liberty, but for liberty as a part of the Roman institutions, that he is zealous.

Of the concise and elegant accounts of the campaigns of Cæsar little can be said. They are incomparable models for military despatches. But histories they are not, and do not pretend to be.

The ancient critics placed Sallust in the same rank with Livy; and unquestionably the small portion of his works which has come down to us is calculated to give a high opinion of his talents. But his style is not very pleasant: and his most powerful work, the account of the Conspiracy of Catiline, has rather the air of a clever party pamphlet than that of a history. It abounds with strange inconsistencies, which, unexplained as they are, necessarily excite doubts as to the fairness of the narrative. It is true, that many circumstances now forgotten may have been familiar to his contemporaries, and may have

rendered passages clear to them which to us appear dubious and perplexing. But a great historian should remember that he writes for distant generations, for men who will perceive the apparent contradictions, and will possess no means of reconciling them. We can only vindicate the fidelity of Sallust at the expense of his skill. But in fact all the information which we have from contemporaries respecting this famous plot is liable to the same objection, and is read by discerning men with the same incredulity. It is all on one side. No answer has reached our times. Yet on the showing of the accusers the accused seem entitled to acquittal. Catiline, we are told, intrigued with a Vestal virgin, and murdered his own son. His house was a den of gamblers and debauchees. No young man could cross his threshold without danger to his fortune and reputation. Yet this is the man with whom Cicero was willing to coalesce in a contest for the first magistracy of the republic; and whom he described, long after the fatal termination of the conspiracy, as an accomplished hypocrite, by whom he had himself been deceived, and who had acted with consummate skill the character of a good citizen and a good friend. We are told that the plot was the most wicked and desperate ever known, and, almost in the same breath, that the great body of the people, and many of the nobles, favoured it; that the richest citizens of Rome were eager for the spoliation of all property, and its highest functionaries for the destruction of all order; that Crassus, Cæsar, the Prætor Lentulus, one of the consuls of the year, one of the consuls elect, were proved or suspected to be engaged in a scheme for subverting institutions to which they owed the highest honours, and introducing universal anarchy. We are told that a government, which knew all this, suffered the conspirator, whose rank, talents, and courage rendered him most dangerous, to quit Rome without molestation. We are told that bondmen and gladiators were to be armed against the citizens. Yet we find that Catiline rejected the slaves who

crowded to enlist in his army, lest, as Sallust himself expresses it, "he should seem to identify their cause with that of the citizens." Finally, we are told that the magistrate, who was universally allowed to have saved all classes of his countrymen from conflagration and massacre, rendered himself so unpopular by his conduct that a marked insult was offered to him at the expiration of his office, and a severe punishment inflicted on him shortly after.

Sallust tells us, what, indeed, the letters and speeches of Cicero sufficiently prove, that some persons consider the shocking and atrocious parts of the plot as mere inventions of the government, designed to excuse its unconstitutional measures. We must confess ourselves to be of that opinion. There was, undoubtedly, a strong party desirous to change the administration. While Pompey held the command of an army, they could not effect their purpose without preparing means for repelling force, if necessary, by force. In all this there is nothing different from the ordinary practice of Roman factions. The other charges brought against the conspirators are so inconsistent and improbable that we give no credit whatever to them. If our readers think this scepticism unreasonable, let them turn to the contemporary accounts of the Popish plot. Let them look over the votes of Parliament, and the speeches of the king; the charges of Scroggs, and the harangues of the managers employed against Strafford. A person who should form his judgment from these pieces alone would believe that London was set on fire by the Papists, and that Sir Edmondbury Godfrey was murdered for his religion. Yet these stories are now altogether exploded. They have been abandoned by statesmen to aldermen, by aldermen to clergymen, by clergymen to old women, and by old women to Sir Harcourt Lees.

Of the Latin historians, Tacitus was certainly the greatest. His style, indeed, is not only faulty in itself, but is, in some respects, peculiarly unfit for historical composition. He carries

his love of effect far beyond the limits of moderation. He tells a fine story finely, but he cannot tell a plain story plainly. He stimulates till stimulants lose their power. Thucydides, as we have already observed, relates ordinary transactions with the unpretending clearness and succinctness of a gazette. His great powers of painting he reserves for events of which the slightest details are interesting. The simplicity of the setting gives additional lustre to the brilliants. There are passages in the narrative of Tacitus superior to the best which can be quoted from Thucydides. But they are not enchased and relieved with the same skill. They are far more striking when extracted from the body of the work to which they belong than when they occur in their place, and are read in connection with what precedes and follows.

In the delineation of character, Tacitus is unrivalled among historians, and has very few superiors among dramatists and novelists. By the delineation of character, we do not mean the practice of drawing up epigrammatic catalogues of good and bad qualities, and appending them to the names of eminent men. No writer, indeed, has done this more skilfully than Tacitus; but this is not his peculiar glory. All the persons who occupy a large space in his works have an individuality of character which seems to pervade all their words and actions. We know them as if we had lived with them. Claudius, Nero, Otho, both the Agrippinas, are masterpieces. But Tiberius is a still higher miracle of art. The historian undertook to make us intimately acquainted with a man singularly dark and inscrutable, — with a man whose real disposition long remained swathed up in intricate folds of factitious virtues, and over whose actions the hypocrisy of his youth, and the seclusion of his old age, threw a singular mystery. He was to exhibit the specious qualities of the tyrant in a light which might render them transparent, and enable us at once to perceive the covering and the vices which it concealed. He was to trace the gradations by which the first

magistrate of a republic, a senator mingling freely in debate, a noble associating with his brother nobles, was transformed into an Asiatic sultan; he was to exhibit a character, distinguished by courage, self-command, and profound policy, yet defiled by all

> "th' extravagancy
> And crazy ribaldry of fancy."

He was to mark the gradual effect of advancing age and approaching death on this strange compound of strength and weakness; to exhibit the old sovereign of the world sinking into a dotage which, though it rendered his appetites eccentric, and his temper savage, never impaired the powers of his stern and penetrating mind — conscious of failing strength, raging with capricious sensuality, yet to the last the keenest of observers, the most artful of dissemblers, and the most terrible of masters. The task was one of extreme difficulty. The execution is almost perfect.

The talent which is required to write history thus bears a considerable affinity to the talent of a great dramatist. There is one obvious distinction. The dramatist creates; the historian only disposes. The difference is not in the mode of execution, but in the mode of conception. Shakspeare is guided by a model which exists in his imagination; Tacitus, by a model furnished from without. Hamlet is to Tiberius what the Laocoon is to the Newton of Roubilliac.

In this part of his art Tacitus certainly had neither equal nor second among the ancient historians. Herodotus, though he wrote in a dramatic form, had little of dramatic genius. The frequent dialogues which he introduces give vivacity and movement to the narrative, but are not strikingly characteristic. Xenophon is fond of telling his readers, at considerable length, what he thought of the persons whose adventures he relates. But he does not show them the men, and enable them to judge for themselves. The heroes of Livy are the most insipid of all

beings, real or imaginary, the heroes of Plutarch always excepted. Indeed, the manner of Plutarch in this respect reminds us of the cookery of those continental inns, the horror of English travellers, in which a certain nondescript broth is kept constantly boiling, and copiously poured, without distinction, over every dish as it comes up to table. Thucydides, though at a wide interval, comes next to Tacitus. His Pericles, his Nicias, his Cleon, his Brasidas, are happily discriminated. The lines are few, the colouring faint: but the general air and expression is caught.

We begin, like the priest in Don Quixote's library, to be tired with taking down books one after another for separate judgment, and feel inclined to pass sentence on them in masses. We shall therefore, instead of pointing out the defects and merits of the different modern historians, state generally in what particulars they have surpassed their predecessors, and in what we conceive them to have failed.

They have certainly been, in one sense, far more strict in their adherence to truth than most of the Greek and Roman writers. They do not think themselves entitled to render their narrative interesting by introducing descriptions, conversations, and harangues which have no existence but in their own imagination. This improvement was gradually introduced. History commenced among the modern nations of Europe, as it had commenced among the Greeks, in romance. Froissart was our Herodotus. Italy was to Europe what Athens was to Greece. In Italy, therefore, a more accurate and manly mode of narration was early introduced. Machiavelli and Guicciardini, in imitation of Livy and Thucydides, composed speeches for their historical personages. But, as the classical enthusiasm which distinguished the age of Lorenzo and Leo gradually subsided, this absurd practice was abandoned. In France, we fear it still, in some degree, keeps its ground. In our own country, a writer who should venture on it would be laughed to scorn. Whether the historians of the last two centuries tell more truth than those

of antiquity, may perhaps be doubted. But it is quite certain that they tell fewer falsehoods.

In the philosophy of history, the moderns have very far surpassed the ancients. It is not, indeed, strange that the Greeks and Romans should not have carried the science of government, or any other experimental science, so far as it has been carried in our time; for the experimental sciences are generally in a state of progression. They were better understood in the seventeenth century than in the sixteenth, and in the eighteenth century than in the seventeenth. But this constant improvement, this natural growth of knowledge, will not altogether account for the immense superiority of the modern writers. The difference is a difference not in degree, but of kind. It is not merely that new principles have been discovered, but that new faculties seem to be exerted. It is not that at one time the human intellect should have made but small progress, and at another time have advanced far: but that at one time it should have been stationary, and at another time constantly proceeding. In taste and imagination, in the graces of style, in the arts of persuasion, in the magnificence of public works, the ancients were at least our equals. They reasoned as justly as ourselves on subjects which required pure demonstration. But in the moral sciences they made scarcely any advance. During the long period which elapsed between the fifth century before the Christian era and the fifth century after it, little perceptible progress was made. All the metaphysical discoveries of all the philosophers, from the time of Socrates to the northern invasion, are not to be compared in importance with those which have been made in England every fifty years since the time of Elizabeth. There is not the least reason to believe that the principles of government, legislation, and political economy, were better understood in the time of Augustus Cæsar than in the time of Pericles. In our own country, the sound doctrines of trade and jurisprudence have been, within the lifetime of a single genera-

tion, dimly hinted, boldly propounded, defended, systematised, adopted by all reflecting men of all parties, quoted in legislative assemblies, incorporated into laws and treaties.

To what is this change to be attributed? Partly, no doubt, to the discovery of printing, a discovery which has not only diffused knowledge widely, but, as we have already observed, has also introduced into reasoning a precision unknown in those ancient communities, in which information was, for the most part, conveyed orally. There was, we suspect, another cause, less obvious, but still more powerful.

The spirit of the two most famous nations of antiquity was remarkably exclusive. In the time of Homer the Greeks had not begun to consider themselves as a distinct race. They still looked with something of childish wonder and awe on the riches and wisdom of Sidon and Egypt. From what causes, and by what gradations, their feelings underwent a change, it is not easy to determine. Their history, from the Trojan to the Persian war, is covered with an obscurity broken only by dim and scattered gleams of truth. But it is certain that a great alteration took place. They regarded themselves as a separate people. They had common religious rites, and common principles of public law, in which foreigners had no part. In all their political systems, monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical there was a strong family likeness. After the retreat of Xerxes and the fall of Mardonius, national pride rendered the separation between the Greeks and the barbarians complete. The conquerors considered themselves men of a superior breed, men who, in their intercourse with neighbouring nations, were to teach, and not to learn. They looked for nothing out of themselves. They borrowed nothing. They translated nothing. We cannot call to mind a single expression of any Greek writer earlier than the age of Augustus, indicating an opinion that anything worth reading could be written in any language except his own. The feelings which sprung from

national glory were not altogether extinguished by national degradation. They were fondly cherished through ages of slavery and shame. The literature of Rome herself was regarded with contempt by those who had fled before her arms, and who bowed beneath her fasces. Voltaire says, in one of his six thousand pamphlets, that he was the first person who told the French that England had produced eminent men besides the Duke of Marlborough. Down to a very late period, the Greeks seem to have stood in need of similar information with respect to their masters. With Paulus Æmilius, Sylla, and Cæsar, they were well acquainted. But the notions which they entertained respecting Cicero and Virgil were, probably, not unlike those which Boileau may have formed about Shakspeare. Dionysius lived in the most splendid age of Latin poetry and eloquence. He was a critic, and, after the manner of his age, an able critic. He studied the language of Rome, associated with its learned men, and compiled its history. Yet he seems to have thought its literature valuable only for the purpose of illustrating its antiquities. His reading appears to have been confined to its public records, and to a few old annalists. Once, and but once, if we remember rightly, he quotes Ennius, to solve a question of etymology. He has written much on the art of oratory: yet he has not mentioned the name of Cicero.

The Romans submitted to the pretensions of a race which they despised. Their epic poet, while he claimed for them pre-eminence in the arts of government and war, acknowledged their inferiority in taste, eloquence, and science. Men of letters affected to understand the Greek language better than their own. Pomponius preferred the honour of becoming an Athenian, by intellectual naturalisation, to all the distinctions which were to be acquired in the political contests of Rome. His great friend composed Greek poems and memoirs. It is well known that Petrarch considered that beautiful language in which his sonnets are written as a barbarous jargon, and intrusted his fame to

those wretched Latin hexameters which, during the last four centuries, have scarcely found four readers. Many eminent Romans appear to have felt the same contempt for their native tongue as compared with the Greek. The prejudice continued to a very late period. Julian was as partial to the Greek language as Frederic the Great to the French: and it seems that he could not express himself with elegance in the dialect of the state which he ruled.

Even those Latin writers who did not carry this affectation so far looked on Greece as the only fount of knowledge. From Greece they derived the measures of their poetry, and, indeed, all of poetry that can be imported. From Greece they borrowed the principles and the vocabulary of their philosophy. To the literature of other nations they do not seem to have paid the slightest attention. The sacred books of the Hebrews, for example, books which, considered merely as human compositions, are invaluable to the critic, the antiquarian, and the philosopher, seem to have been utterly unnoticed by them. The peculiarities of Judaism, and the rapid growth of Christianity, attracted their notice. They made war against the Jews. They made laws against the Christians. But they never opened the books of Moses. Juvenal quotes the Pentateuch with censure. The author of the treatise on "the Sublime" quotes it with praise: but both of them quote it erroneously. When we consider what sublime poetry, what curious history, what striking and peculiar views of the Divine nature and of the social duties of men, are to be found in the Jewish scriptures, when we consider that two sects on which the attention of the government was constantly fixed appealed to those scriptures as the rule of their faith and practice, this indifference is astonishing. The fact seems to be, that the Greeks admired only themselves, and that the Romans admired only themselves and the Greeks. Literary men turned away with disgust from modes of thought and expression so widely different from all

that they had been accustomed to admire. The effect was narrowness and sameness of thought. Their minds, if we may so express ourselves, bred in and in, and were accordingly cursed with barrenness and degeneracy. No extraneous beauty or vigour was engrafted on the decaying stock. By an exclusive attention to one class of phenomena, by an exclusive taste for one species of excellence, the human intellect was stunted. Occasional coincidences were turned into general rules. Prejudices were confounded with instincts. On man, as he was found in a particular state of society — on government, as it had existed in a particular corner of the world, many just observations were made; but of man as man, or government as government, little was known. Philosophy remained stationary. Slight changes, sometimes for the worse and sometimes for the better, were made in the superstructure. But nobody thought of examining the foundations.

The vast despotism of the Cæsars, gradually effacing all national peculiarities, and assimilating the remotest provinces of the empire to each other, augmented the evil. At the close of the third century after Christ, the prospects of mankind were fearfully dreary. A system of etiquette, as pompously frivolous as that of the Escurial, had been established. A sovereign almost invisible; a crowd of dignitaries minutely distinguished by badges and titles; rhetoricians who said nothing but what had been said ten thousand times; schools in which nothing was taught but what had been known for ages: such was the machinery provided for the government and instruction of the most enlightened part of the human race. That great community was then in danger of experiencing a calamity far more terrible than any of the quick, inflammatory, destroying maladies to which nations are liable, — a tottering, drivelling, paralytic longevity, the immortality of the Struldbrugs, a Chinese civilisation. It would be easy to indicate many points of resemblance between the subjects of Diocletian and the people

of that Celestial Empire, where, during many centuries, nothing has been learned or unlearned; where government, where education, where the whole system of life, is a ceremony; where knowledge forgets to increase and multiply, and, like the talent buried in the earth, or the pound wrapped up in the napkin, experiences neither waste nor augmentation.

The torpor was broken by two great revolutions, the one moral, the other political, the one from within, the other from without. The victory of Christianity over Paganism, considered with relation to this subject only, was of great importance. It overthrew the old system of morals; and with it much of the old system of metaphysics. It furnished the orator with new topics of declamation, and the logician with new points of controversy. Above all, it introduced a new principle, of which the operation was constantly felt in every part of society. It stirred the stagnant mass from the inmost depths. It excited all the passions of a stormy democracy in the quiet and listless population of an overgrown empire. The fear of heresy did what the sense of oppression could not do; it changed men, accustomed to be turned over like sheep from tyrant to tyrant, into devoted partisans and obstinate rebels. The tones of an eloquence which had been silent for ages resounded from the pulpit of Gregory. A spirit which had been extinguished on the plains of Philippi revived in Athanasius and Ambrose.

Yet even this remedy was not sufficiently violent for the disease. It did not prevent the empire of Constantinople from relapsing, after a short paroxysm of excitement, into a state of stupefaction, to which history furnishes scarcely any parallel. We there find that a polished society, a society in which a most intricate and elaborate system of jurisprudence was established, in which the arts of luxury were well understood, in which the works of the great ancient writers were preserved and studied, existed for nearly a thousand years without making one great discovery in science, or producing one book which is read by

any but curious inquirers. There were tumults, too, and controversies, and wars in abundance: and these things, bad as they are in themselves, have generally been favourable to the progress of the intellect. But here they tormented without stimulating. The waters were troubled; but no healing influence descended. The agitations resembled the grinnings and writhings of a galvanised corpse, not the struggles of an athletic man.

From this miserable state the Western Empire was saved by the fiercest and most destroying visitation with which God has ever chastened his creatures — the invasion of the Northern nations. Such a cure was required for such a distemper. The fire of London, it has been observed, was a blessing. It burned down the city; but it burned out the plague. The same may be said of the tremendous devastation of the Roman dominions. It annihilated the noisome recesses in which lurked the seeds of great moral maladies; it cleared an atmosphere fatal to the health and vigour of the human mind. It cost Europe a thousand years of barbarism to escape the fate of China.

At length the terrible purification was accomplished; and the second civilisation of mankind commenced, under circumstances which afforded a strong security that it would never retrograde and never pause. Europe was now a great federal community. Her numerous states were united by the easy ties of international law and a common religion. Their institutions, their languages, their manners, their tastes in literature, their modes of education, were widely different. Their connection was close enough to allow of mutual observation and improvement, yet not so close as to destroy the idioms of national opinion and feeling.

The balance of moral and intellectual influence thus established between the nations of Europe is far more important than the balance of political power. Indeed, we are inclined to think that the latter is valuable principally because it tends to maintain the former. The civilised world has thus been preserved

from a uniformity of character fatal to all improvement. Every part of it has been illuminated with light reflected from every other. Competition has produced activity where monopoly would have produced sluggishness. The number of experiments in moral science which the speculator has an opportunity of witnessing has been increased beyond all calculation. Society and human nature, instead of being seen in a single point of view, are presented to him under ten thousand different aspects. By observing the manners of surrounding nations, by studying their literature, by comparing it with that of his own country and of the ancient republics, he is enabled to correct those errors into which the most acute men must fall when they reason from a single species to a genus. He learns to distinguish what is local from what is universal: what is transitory from what is eternal; to discriminate between exceptions and rules; to trace the operation of disturbing causes; to separate those general principles which are always true and everywhere applicable from the accidental circumstances with which, in every community, they are blended, and with which, in an isolated community, they are confounded by the most philosophical mind.

Hence it is that, in generalisation, the writers of modern times have far surpassed those of antiquity. The historians of our own country are unequalled in depth and precision of reason; and, even in the works of our mere compilers, we often meet with speculations beyond the reach of Thucydides or Tacitus.

But it must, at the same time, be admitted that they have characteristic faults, so closely connected with their characteristic merits, and of such magnitude, that it may well be doubted whether, on the whole, this department of literature has gained or lost during the last two-and-twenty centuries.

The best historians of later times have been seduced from truth, not by their imagination, but by their reason. They far excel their predecessors in the art of deducing general principles

from facts. But unhappily they have fallen into the error of distorting facts to suit general principles. They arrive at a theory from looking at some of the phenomena; and the remaining phenomena they strain or curtail to suit the theory. For this purpose it is not necessary that they should assert what is absolutely false; for all questions in morals and politics are questions of comparison and degree. Any proposition which does not involve a contradiction in terms may by possibility be true; and if all the circumstances which raise a probability in its favour be stated and enforced, and those which lead to an opposite conclusion be omitted or lightly passed over, it may appear to be demonstrated. In every human character and transaction there is a mixture of good and evil: a little exaggeration, a little suppression, a judicious use of epithets, a watchful and searching scepticism with respect to the evidence on one side, a convenient credulity with respect to every report or tradition on the other, may easily make a saint of Laud, or a tyrant of Henry the Fourth.

This species of misrepresentation abounds in the most valuable works of modern historians. Herodotus tells his story like a slovenly witness, who, heated by partialities and prejudices, unacquainted with the established rules of evidence, and uninstructed as to the obligations of his oath, confounds what he imagines with what he has seen and heard, and brings out facts, reports, conjectures, and fancies, in one mass. Hume is an accomplished advocate. Without positively asserting much more than he can prove, he gives prominence to all the circumstances which support his case; he glides lightly over those which are unfavourable to it; his own witnesses are applauded and encouraged; the statements which seem to throw discredit on them are controverted; the contradictions into which they fall are explained away; a clear and connected abstract of their evidence is given. Everything that is offered on the other side is scrutinised with the utmost severity; every suspicious cir-

cumstance is a ground for comment and invective; what cannot be denied is extenuated, or passed by without notice; concessions even are sometimes made: but this insidious candour only increases the effect of the vast mass of sophistry.

We have mentioned Hume as the ablest and most popular writer of his class; but the charge which we have brought against him is one to which all our most distinguished historians are in some degree obnoxious. Gibbon, in particular, deserves very severe censure. Of all the numerous culprits, however, none is more deeply guilty than Mr. Mitford. We willingly acknowledge the obligations which are due to his talents and industry. The modern historians of Greece had been in the habit of writing as if the world had learned nothing new during the last sixteen hundred years. Instead of illustrating the events which they narrated by the philosophy of a more enlightened age, they judged of antiquity by itself alone. They seemed to think that notions, long driven from every other corner of literature, had a prescriptive right to occupy this last fastness. They considered all the ancient historians as equally authentic. They scarcely made any distinction between him who related events at which he had himself been present and him who five hundred years after composed a philosophic romance for a society which had in the interval undergone a complete change. It was all Greek, and all true! The centuries which separated Plutarch from Thucydides seemed as nothing to men who lived in an age so remote. The distance of time produced an error similar to that which is sometimes produced by distance of place. There are many good ladies who think that all the people in India live together, and who charge a friend setting out for Calcutta with kind messages to Bombay. To Rollin and Barthelemi, in the same manner, all the classics were contemporaries.

Mr. Mitford certainly introduced great improvements; he showed us that men who wrote in Greek and Latin sometimes told lies; he showed us that ancient history might be related in

such a manner as to furnish not only allusions to schoolboys, but important lessons to statesmen. From that love of theatrical effect and high-flown sentiment which had poisoned almost every other work on the same subject his book is perfectly free. But his passion for a theory as false, and far more ungenerous, led him substantially to violate truth in every page. Statements unfavourable to democracy are made with unhesitating confidence, and with the utmost bitterness of language. Every charge brought against a monarch or an aristocracy is sifted with the utmost care. If it cannot be denied, some palliating supposition is suggested; or we are at least reminded that some circumstances now unknown *may* have justified what at present appears unjustifiable. Two events are reported by the same author in the same sentence; their truth rests on the same testimony; but the one supports the darling hypothesis, and the other seems inconsistent with it. The one is taken, and the other is left.

The practice of distorting narrative into conformity with theory is a vice not so unfavourable as at first sight it may appear to the interests of political science. We have compared the writers who indulge in it to advocates; and we may add, that their conflicting fallacies, like those of advocates, correct each other. It has always been held, in the most enlightened nations, that a tribunal will decide a judicial question most fairly when it has heard two able men argue, as unfairly as possible, on the two opposite sides of it; and we are inclined to think that this opinion is just. Sometimes, it is true, superior eloquence and dexterity will make the worse appear the better reason; but it is at least certain that the judge will be compelled to contemplate the case under two different aspects. It is certain that no important consideration will altogether escape notice.

This is at present the state of history. The poet laureate appears for the Church of England, Lingard for the Church of Rome. Brodie has moved to set aside the verdicts obtained

by Hume; and the cause in which Mitford succeeded is, we understand, about to be reheard. In the midst of these disputes, however, history proper, if we may use the term, is disappearing. The high, grave, impartial summing up of Thucydides is nowhere to be found.

While our historians are practising all the arts of controversy, they miserably neglect the art of narration, the art of interesting the affections and presenting pictures to the imagination. That a writer may produce these effects without violating truth is sufficiently proved by many excellent biographical works. The immense popularity which well-written books of this kind have acquired deserves the serious consideration of historians. Voltaire's *Charles the Twelfth*, Marmontel's *Memoirs*, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Southey's account of Nelson, are perused with delight by the most frivolous and indolent. Whenever any tolerable book of the same description makes its appearance, the circulating libraries are mobbed; the book societies are in commotion; the new novel lies uncut; the magazines and newspapers fill their columns with extracts. In the meantime histories of great empires, written by men of eminent ability, lie unread on the shelves of ostentatious libraries.

The writers of history seem to entertain an aristocratical contempt for the writers of memoirs. They think it beneath the dignity of men who describe the revolutions of nations to dwell on the details which constitute the charm of biography. They have imposed on themselves a code of conventional decencies as absurd as that which has been the bane of the French drama. The most characteristic and interesting circumstances are omitted or softened down, because, as we are told, they are too trivial for the majesty of history. The majesty of history seems to resemble the majesty of the poor King of Spain, who died a martyr to ceremony because the proper dignitaries were not at hand to render him assistance.

That history would be more amusing if this etiquette were

relaxed will, we suppose, be acknowledged. But would it be less dignified or less useful? What do we mean when we say that one past event is important and another insignificant? No past event has any intrinsic importance. The knowledge of it is valuable only as it leads us to form just calculations with respect to the future. A history which does not serve this purpose, though it may be filled with battles, treaties, and commotions, is as useless as the series of turnpike tickets collected by Sir Matthew Mite.

Let us suppose that Lord Clarendon, instead of filling hundreds of folio pages with copies of state papers, in which the same assertions and contradictions are repeated till the reader is overpowered with weariness, had condescended to be the Boswell of the Long Parliament. Let us suppose that he had exhibited to us the wise and lofty self-government of Hampden, leading while he seemed to follow, and propounding unanswerable arguments in the strongest forms with the modest air of an inquirer anxious for information; the delusions which misled the noble spirit of Vane; the coarse fanaticism which concealed the yet loftier genius of Cromwell, destined to control a mutinous army and a factious people, to abase the flag of Holland, to arrest the victorious arms of Sweden, and to hold the balance firm between the rival monarchies of France and Spain. Let us suppose that he had made his Cavaliers and Roundheads talk in their own style; that he had reported some of the ribaldry of Rupert's pages, and some of the cant of Harrison and Fleetwood. Would not his work in that case have been more interesting? Would it not have been more accurate?

A history in which every particular incident may be true may on the whole be false. The circumstances which have most influence on the happiness of mankind, the changes of manners and morals, the transition of communities from poverty to wealth, from knowledge to ignorance, from ferocity to humanity — these are, for the most part, noiseless revolutions. Their prog-

ress is rarely indicated by what historians are pleased to call important events. They are not achieved by armies, or enacted by senates. They are sanctioned by no treaties, and recorded in no archives. They are carried on in every school, in every church, behind ten thousand counters, at ten thousand firesides. The upper current of society presents no certain criterion by which we can judge of the direction in which the under-current flows. We read of defeats and victories. But we know that nations may be miserable amidst victories and prosperous amidst defeats. We read of the fall of wise ministers and of the rise of profligate favourites. But we must remember how small a proportion the good or evil effected by a single statesman can bear to the good or evil of a great social system.

Bishop Watson compares a geologist to a gnat mounted on an elephant, and laying down theories as to the whole internal structure of the vast animal, from the phenomena of the hide. The comparison is unjust to the geologists; but is very applicable to those historians who write as if the body politic were homogeneous, who look only on the surface of affairs, and never think of the mighty and various organisation which lies deep below.

In the works of such writers as these, England, at the close of the Seven Years' War, is in the highest state of prosperity: at the close of the American war she is in a miserable and degraded condition; as if the people were not on the whole as rich, as well governed, and as well educated at the latter period as at the former. We have read books called Histories of England, under the reign of George the Second, in which the rise of Methodism is not even mentioned. A hundred years hence this breed of authors will, we hope, be extinct. If it should still exist, the late ministerial interregnum will be described in terms which will seem to imply that all government was at an end; that the social contract was annulled; and that the hand of every man was against his neighbour, until the wisdom and virtue of the new cabinet educed order out of the

chaos of anarchy. We are quite certain that misconceptions as gross prevail at this moment respecting many important parts of our annals.

The effect of historical reading is analogous, in many respects, to that produced by foreign travel. The student, like the tourist, is transported into a new state of society. He sees new fashions. He hears new modes of expression. His mind is enlarged by contemplating the wide diversities of laws, of morals, and of manners. But men may travel far, and return with minds as contracted as if they had never stirred from their own market-town. In the same manner, men may know the dates of many battles and the genealogies of many royal houses, and yet be no wiser. Most people look at past times as princes look at foreign countries. More than one illustrious stranger has landed on our island amidst the shouts of a mob, has dined with the king, has hunted with the master of the stag-hounds, has seen the guards reviewed, and a knight of the garter installed, has cantered along Regent Street, has visited Saint Paul's, and noted down its dimensions; and has then departed, thinking that he has seen England. He has, in fact, seen a few public buildings, public men, and public ceremonies. But of the vast and complex system of society, of the fine shades of national character, of the practical operation of government and laws, he knows nothing. He who would understand these things rightly must not confine his observations to palaces and solemn days. He must see ordinary men as they appear in their ordinary business and in their ordinary pleasures. He must mingle in the crowds of the exchange and the coffee-house. He must obtain admittance to the convivial table and the domestic hearth. He must bear with vulgar expressions. He must not shrink from exploring even the retreats of misery. He who wishes to understand the condition of mankind in former ages must proceed on the same principle. If he attends only to public transactions, to wars, congresses, and debates, his studies will be as unprofit-

able as the travels of those imperial, royal, and serene sovereigns who form their judgment of our island from having gone in state to a few fine sights, and from having held formal conferences with a few great officers.

The perfect historian is he in whose work the character and spirit of an age is exhibited in miniature. He relates no fact, he attributes no expression to his characters, which is not authenticated by sufficient testimony. But, by judicious selection, rejection, and arrangement, he gives to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction. In his narrative a due subordination is observed: some transactions are prominent; others retire. But the scale on which he represents them is increased or diminished, not according to the dignity of the persons concerned in them, but according to the degree in which they elucidate the condition of society and the nature of man. He shows us the court, the camp, and the senate. But he shows us also the nation. He considers no anecdote, no peculiarity of manner, no familiar saying, as too insignificant for his notice which is not too insignificant to illustrate the operation of laws, of religion, and of education, and to mark the progress of the human mind. Men will not merely be described, but will be made intimately known to us. The changes of manners will be indicated, not merely by a few general phrases or a few extracts from statistical documents, but by appropriate images presented in every line.

If a man, such as we are supposing, should write the history of England, he would assuredly not omit the battles, the sieges, the negotiations, the seditions, the ministerial changes. But with these he would intersperse the details which are the charm of historical romances. At Lincoln Cathedral there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice out of the pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master. It is so far superior to every other in the church that, according to the tradition, the vanquished artist killed himself from mortification.

Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner, has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which, even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs. But a truly great historian would reclaim those materials which the novelist has appropriated. The history of the government, and the history of the people, would be exhibited in that mode in which alone they can be exhibited justly, in inseparable conjunction and intermixture. We should not then have to look for the wars and votes of the Puritans in Clarendon, and for their phraseology in Old Mortality; for one half of King James in Hume, and for the other half in the Fortunes of Nigel.

The early part of our imaginary history would be rich with colouring from romance, ballad, and chronicle. We should find ourselves in the company of knights such as those of Froissart, and of pilgrims such as those who rode with Chaucer from the Tabard. Society would be shown from the highest to the lowest, — from the royal cloth of state to the den of the outlaw; from the throne of the legate to the chimney-corner where the begging friar regaled himself. Palmers, minstrels, crusaders, — the stately monastery, with the good cheer in its refectory and the high-mass in its chapel, — the manor-house, with its hunting and hawking, — the tournament, with the heralds and ladies, the trumpets and the cloth of gold, — would give truth and life to the representation. We should perceive, in a thousand slight touches, the importance of the privileged burgher, and the fierce and haughty spirit which swelled under the collar of the degraded villain. The revival of letters would not merely be described in a few magnificent periods. We should discern, in innumerable particulars, the fermentation of mind, the eager appetite for knowledge, which distinguished the sixteenth from the fifteenth century. In the Reformation we should see, not merely a schism which changed the ecclesiastical constitution of England

and the mutual relations of the European powers, but a moral war which raged in every family, which set the father against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. Henry would be painted with the skill of Tacitus. We should have the change of his character from his profuse and joyous youth to his savage and imperious old age. We would perceive the gradual progress of selfish and tyrannical passions in a mind not naturally insensible or ungenerous; and to the last we should detect some remains of that open and noble temper which endeared him to a people whom he oppressed, struggling with the hardness of despotism and the irritability of disease. We should see Elizabeth in all her weakness and in all her strength, surrounded by the handsome favourites whom she never trusted, and the wise old statesmen whom she never dismissed, uniting in herself the most contradictory qualities of both her parents, — the coquetry, the caprice, the petty malice of Anne; — the haughty and resolute spirit of Henry. We have no hesitation in saying that a great artist might produce a portrait of this remarkable woman at least as striking as that in the novel of Kenilworth, without employing a single trait not authenticated by ample testimony. In the meantime, we should see arts cultivated, wealth accumulated, the conveniences of life improved. We should see the keeps, where nobles, insecure themselves, spread insecurity around them, gradually giving place to the halls of peaceful opulence, to the oriels of Longleat, and the stately pinnacles of Burleigh. We should see towns extended, deserts cultivated, the hamlets of fishermen turned into wealthy havens, the meal of the peasant improved, and his hut more commodiously furnished. We should see those opinions and feelings which produced the great struggle against the House of Stuart slowly growing up in the bosom of private families, before they manifested themselves in parliamentary debates. Then would come the civil war. Those skirmishes on which Clarendon dwells so

minutely would be told, as Thucydides would have told them, with perspicuous conciseness. They are merely connecting links. But the great characteristics of the age, the loyal enthusiasm of the brave English gentry, the fierce licentiousness of the swearing, dicing, drunken reprobates, whose excesses disgraced the royal cause, — the austerity of the Presbyterian Sabbaths in the city, the extravagance of the independent preachers in the camp, the precise garb, the severe countenance, the petty scruples, the affected accent, the absurd names and phrases which marked the Puritans, — the valour, the policy, the public spirit, which lurked beneath these ungraceful disguises, — the dreams of the raving Fifth-monarchy-man, the dreams, scarcely less wild, of the philosophic republican, all these would enter into the representation, and render it at once more exact and more striking.

The instruction derived from history thus written would be of a vivid and practical character. It would be received by the imagination as well as by the reason. It would be not merely traced on the mind, but branded into it. Many truths, too, would be learned, which can be learned in no other manner. As the history of states is generally written, the greatest and most momentous revolutions seem to come upon them like supernatural inflictions, without warning or cause. But the fact is, that such revolutions are almost always the consequences of moral changes, which have gradually passed on the mass of the community, and which originally proceed far before their progress is indicated by any public measure. An intimate knowledge of the domestic history of nations is therefore absolutely necessary to the prognosis of political events. A narrative defective in this respect, is as useless as a medical treatise which should pass by all the symptoms attendant on the early stage of a disease and mention only what occurs when the patient is beyond the reach of remedies.

A historian, such as we have been attempting to describe, would indeed be an intellectual prodigy. In his mind, powers

scarcely compatible with each other must be tempered into an exquisite harmony. We shall sooner see another Shakspeare or another Homer. The highest excellence to which any single faculty can be brought would be less surprising than such a happy and delicate combination of qualities. Yet the contemplation of imaginary models is not an unpleasant or useless employment of the mind. It cannot indeed produce perfection; but it produces improvement and nourishes that generous and liberal fastidiousness which is not inconsistent with the strongest sensibility to merit, and which, while it exalts our conceptions of the art, does not render us unjust to the artist.

THE AGE OF DISCUSSION[1]

Walter Bagehot

(1826–1877)

[Walter Bagehot was an English banker, economist, publicist, critic, and journalist. For seventeen years he was editor of the *Economist*. Among his published works are *The English Constitution* (1867), *Physics and Politics* (1872), *Literary Studies* (1879), and *Economic Studies* (1880). To a large practical experience of men and business, he added extensive reading and a faculty for scientific analysis and generalization. The publication of the Darwinian theories caused him to speculate with great interest on the possible application of those theories to questions of economic and national development.

In *Physics and Politics* a somewhat vague but suggestive attempt was made to apply the theory of natural selection to the development of states. Bagehot believed that in the development of states certain national characters are formed and conserved by natural selection. His theory in part, at least, presupposes the inheritance of acquired characteristics, and in so far it is probably vulnerable. But what he has to say upon the relation of custom and discussion to the progress of society is still noteworthy. The earlier steps in progress, he maintains, are conditional on the forming of groups of coöperating individuals. But this coöperation is produced by the force of custom, under the tutelage of which a group or society increases in strength until a certain maximum of efficiency is reached. Then stagnancy results, unless the now outworn government by custom is replaced by a government based on free discussion of public affairs.

In the present selection, the last part of this thesis is expounded: government by discussion is considered as an agent in social progress.

The selection illustrates Bagehot's abrupt and somewhat incoherent method of writing. Lack of precise statement of topics and precise indication of the sequence of his thought, both between and within paragraphs, makes the outlining of the essay a task of indicating relations the author has only implied. The student will find that as a result of this lack of pre-

[1] From Chapter V of *Physics and Politics* (1872). Published in the International Scientific Series, D. Appleton and Co., 1912.

cision he is tempted to let paragraph summaries take the place of a logical outline. But the essay must be first resolved into groups of related paragraphs, with clear indication of the nature of the relations between the groups. The general plan of the selection will then become clear.]

THE greatest living contrast is between the old Eastern and customary civilisations and the new Western and changeable civilisations. A year or two ago an inquiry was made of our most intelligent officers in the East, not as to whether the English Government were really doing good in the East, but as to whether the natives of India themselves thought we were doing good; to which, in a majority of cases, the officers who were the best authority, answered thus: 'No doubt you are giving the Indians many great benefits: you give them continued peace, free trade, the right to live as they like, subject to the laws; in these points and others they are far better off than they ever were; but still they cannot make you out. What puzzles them is your constant disposition to change, or as you call it, improvement. Their own life in every detail being regulated by ancient usage, they cannot comprehend a policy which is always bringing something new; they do not a bit believe that the desire to make them comfortable and happy is the root of it; they believe, on the contrary, that you are aiming at something which they do not understand — that you mean to "take away their religion;" in a word, that the end and object of all these continual changes is to make Indians not what they are and what they like to be, but something new and different from what they are, and what they would not like to be.' In the East, in a word, we are attempting to put new wine into old bottles — to pour what we can of a civilisation whose spirit is progress into the form of a civilisation whose spirit is fixity, and whether we shall succeed or not is perhaps the most interesting question in an age abounding almost beyond example in questions of political interest.

Historical inquiries show that the feeling of the Hindoos

is the old feeling, and that the feeling of the Englishman is a modern feeling. 'Old law rests,' as Sir Henry Maine puts it, 'not on contract but on status.' The life of ancient civilisation, so far as legal records go, runs back to a time when every important particular of life was settled by a usage which was social, political, and religious, as we should now say, all in one — which those who obeyed it could not have been able to analyse, for those distinctions had no place in their mind and language, but which they felt to be a usage of imperishable import, and above all things to be kept unchanged. In former papers I have shown, or at least tried to show, why these customary civilisations were the only ones which suited an early society; why, so to say, they alone could have been first; in what manner they had in their very structure a decisive advantage over all competitors. But now comes the further question: If fixity is an invariable ingredient in early civilisations, how then did any civilisation become unfixed? No doubt most civilisations stuck where they first were; no doubt we see now why stagnation is the rule of the world, and why progress is the very rare exception; but we do not learn what it is which has caused progress in these few cases, or the absence of what it is which has denied it in all others.

To this question history gives a very clear and very remarkable answer. It is that the change from the age of status to the age of choice was first made in states where the government was to a great and a growing extent a government by discussion, and where the subjects of that discussion were in some degree abstract, or, as we should say, matters of principle. It was in the small republics of Greece and Italy that the chain of custom was first broken. 'Liberty said, Let there be light, and, like a sunrise on the sea, Athens arose,' says Shelley, and his historical philosophy is in this case far more correct than is usual with him. A free state — a state with liberty — means a state, call it republic or call it monarchy, in which the sovereign

power is divided between many persons, and in which there is a discussion among those persons. Of these the Greek republics were the first in history, if not in time, and Athens was the greatest of those republics.

After the event it is easy to see why the teaching of history should be this and nothing else. It is easy to see why the common discussion of common actions or common interests should become the root of change and progress. In early society, originality in life was forbidden and repressed by the fixed rule of life. It may not have been quite so much so in Ancient Greece as in some other parts of the world. But it was very much so even there. As a recent writer has well said, 'Law then presented itself to men's minds as something venerable and unchangeable, as old as the city; it had been delivered by the founder himself, when he laid the walls of the city, and kindled its sacred fire.' An ordinary man who wished to strike out a new path, to begin a new and important practice by himself, would have been peremptorily required to abandon his novelties on pain of death; he was deviating, he would be told, from the ordinances imposed by the gods on his nation, and he must not do so to please himself. On the contrary, others were deeply interested in his actions. If he disobeyed, the gods might inflict grievous harm on all the people as well as him. Each partner in the most ancient kind of partnerships was supposed to have the power of attracting the wrath of the divinities on the entire firm, upon the other partners quite as much as upon himself. The quaking bystanders in a superstitious age would soon have slain an isolated bold man in the beginning of his innovations. What Macaulay so relied on as the incessant source of progress — the desire of man to better his condition — was not then permitted to work; man was required to live as his ancestors had lived.

Still further away from those times were the 'free thought' and the 'advancing sciences' of which we now hear so much. The first and most natural subject upon which human thought

concerns itself is religion; the first wish of the half-emancipated thinker is to use his reason on the great problems of human destiny — to find out whence he came and whither he goes, to form for himself the most reasonable idea of God which he can form. But, as Mr. Grote happily said — 'This is usually what ancient times would not let a man do. His *gens* or his φρατραι required him to believe as they believed.' Toleration is of all ideas the most modern, because the notion that the bad religion of A cannot impair, here or hereafter, the welfare of B, is, strange to say, a modern idea. And the help of 'science,' at that stage of thought, is still more nugatory. Physical science, as we conceive it — that is, the systematic investigation of external nature in detail — did not then exist. A few isolated observations on surface things — a half-correct calendar, secrets mainly of priestly invention, and in priestly custody — were all that was then imagined; the idea of using a settled study of nature as a basis for the discovery of new instruments and new things, did not then exist. It is indeed a modern idea, and is peculiar to a few European countries even yet. In the most intellectual city of the ancient world, in its most intellectual age, Socrates, its most intellectual inhabitant, discouraged the study of physics because they engendered uncertainty, and did not augment human happiness. The kind of knowledge which is most connected with human progress now was that least connected with it then.

But a government by discussion, if it can be borne, at once breaks down the yoke of fixed custom. The idea of the two is inconsistent. As far as it goes, the mere putting up of a subject to discussion, with the object of being guided by that discussion, is a clear admission that that subject is in no degree settled by established rule, and that men are free to choose in it. It is an admission too that there is no sacred authority — no one transcendent and divinely appointed man whom in that matter the community is bound to obey. And if a single subject

or group of subjects be once admitted to discussion, ere long the habit of discussion comes to be established, the sacred charm of use and wont to be dissolved. 'Democracy,' it has been said in modern times, 'is like the grave; it takes, but it does not give.' The same is true of 'discussion.' Once effectually submit a subject to that ordeal, and you can never withdraw it again; you can never again clothe it with mystery, or fence it by consecration; it remains for ever open to free choice, and exposed to profane deliberation.

The only subjects which can be first submitted, or which till a very late age of civilisation can be submitted to discussion in the community, are the questions involving the visible and pressing interests of the community; they are political questions of high and urgent import. If a nation has in any considerable degree gained the habit, and exhibited the capacity, to discuss these questions with freedom, and to decide them with discretion, to argue much on politics and not to argue ruinously, an enormous advance in other kinds of civilisation may confidently be predicted for it. And the reason is a plain deduction from the principles which we have found to guide early civilisation. The first pre-historic men were passionate savages, with the greatest difficulty coerced into order and compressed into a state. For ages were spent in beginning that order and founding that state; the only sufficient and effectual agent in so doing was consecrated custom; but then that custom gathered over everything, arrested all onward progress, and stayed the originality of mankind. If, therefore, a nation is able to gain the benefit of custom without the evil — if after ages of waiting it can have order and choice together — at once the fatal clog is removed, and the ordinary springs of progress, as in a modern community we conceive them, begin their elastic action.

Discussion, too, has incentives to progress peculiar to itself. It gives a premium to intelligence. To set out the arguments required to determine political action with such force and effect

that they really should determine it, is a high and great exertion of intellect. Of course, all such arguments are produced under conditions; the argument abstractedly best is not necessarily the winning argument. Political discussion must move those who have to act; it must be framed in the ideas, and be consonant with the precedent, of its time, just as it must speak its language. But within these marked conditions good discussion is better than bad; no people can bear a government of discussion for a day, which does not, within the boundaries of its prejudices and its ideas, prefer good reasoning to bad reasoning, sound argument to unsound. A prize for argumentative mind is given in free states, to which no other states have anything to compare.

Tolerance too is learned in discussion, and, as history shows, is only so learned. In all customary societies bigotry is the ruling principle. In rude places to this day any one who says anything new is looked on with suspicion, and is persecuted by opinion if not injured by penalty. One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea. It is, as common people say, so 'upsetting;' it makes you think that, after all, your favourite notions may be wrong, your firmest beliefs ill-founded; it is certain that till now there was no place allotted in your mind to the new and startling inhabitant, and now that it has conquered an entrance, you do not at once see which of your old ideas it will or will not turn out, with which of them it can be reconciled, and with which it is at essential enmity. Naturally, therefore, common men hate a new idea, and are disposed more or less to ill-treat the original man who brings it. Even nations with long habits of discussion are intolerant enough. In England, where there is on the whole probably a freer discussion of a greater number of subjects than ever was before in the world, we know how much power bigotry retains. But discussion, to be successful, requires tolerance. It fails wherever, as in a French political assembly, any one who hears anything

which he dislikes tries to howl it down. If we know that a nation is capable of enduring continuous discussion, we know that it is capable of practising with equanimity continuous tolerance.

The power of a government by discussion as an instrument of elevation plainly depends — other things being equal — on the greatness or littleness of the things to be discussed. There are periods when great ideas are 'in the air,' and when, from some cause or other, even common persons seem to partake of an unusual elevation. The age of Elizabeth in England was conspicuously such a time. The new idea of the Reformation in religion, and the enlargement of the *mœnia mundi* by the discovery of new and singular lands, taken together, gave an impulse to thought which few, if any, ages can equal. The discussion, though not wholly free, was yet far freer than in the average of ages and countries. Accordingly, every pursuit seemed to start forward. Poetry, science, and architecture, different as they are, and removed as they all are at first sight from such an influence as discussion, were suddenly started onward. Macaulay would have said you might rightly read the power of discussion 'in the poetry of Shakespeare, in the prose of Bacon, in the oriels of Longleat, and the stately pinnacles of Burleigh.' This is, in truth, but another case of the principle of which I have had occasion to say so much as to the character of ages and countries. If any particular power is much prized in an age, those possessed of that power will be imitated; those deficient in that power will be despised. In consequence an unusual quantity of that power will be developed, and be conspicuous. Within certain limits vigorous and elevated thought was respected in Elizabeth's time, and, therefore, vigorous and elevated thinkers were many; and the effect went far beyond the cause. It penetrated into physical science, for which very few men cared; and it began a reform in philosophy to which almost all were then opposed. In a word, the

temper of the age encouraged originality, and in consequence original men started into prominence, went hither and thither where they liked, arrived at goals which the age never expected, and so made it ever memorable.

In this manner all the great movements of thought in ancient and modern times have been nearly connected in time with government by discussion. Athens, Rome, the Italian republics of the Middle Ages, the *communes* and states-general of feudal Europe, have all had a special and peculiar quickening influence, which they owed to their freedom, and which states without that freedom have never communicated. And it has been at the time of great epochs of thought — at the Peloponnesian war, at the fall of the Roman Republic, at the Reformation, at the French Revolution — that such liberty of speaking and thinking have produced their full effect.

It is on this account that the discussions of savage tribes have produced so little effect in emancipating those tribes from their despotic customs. The oratory of the North American Indian — the first savage whose peculiarities fixed themselves in the public imagination — has become celebrated, and yet the North American Indians were scarcely, if at all, better orators than many other savages. Almost all of the savages who have melted away before the Englishman were better speakers than he is. But the oratory of the savages has led to nothing, and was likely to lead to nothing. It is a discussion not of principles, but of undertakings; its topics are whether expedition A will answer, and should be undertaken; whether expedition B will not answer, and should not be undertaken; whether village A is the best village to plunder, or whether village B is a better. Such discussions augment the vigour of language, encourage a debating facility, and develop those gifts of demeanour and of gesture which excite the confidence of the hearers. But they do not excite the speculative intellect, do not lead men to argue speculative doctrines, or to question

ancient principles. They, in some material respects, improve the sheep within the fold; but they do not help them or incline them to leap out of the fold.

The next question, therefore, is, Why did discussions in some cases relate to prolific ideas, and why did discussions in other cases relate only to isolated transactions? The reply which history suggests is very clear and very remarkable. Some races of men at our earliest knowledge of them have already acquired the basis of a free constitution; they have already the rudiments of a complex polity — a monarch, a senate, and a general meeting of citizens. The Greeks were one of those races, and it happened, as was natural, that there was in process of time a struggle, the earliest that we know of, between the aristocratical party, originally represented by the senate, and the popular party, represented by the 'general meeting.' This is plainly a question of principle, and its being so has led to its history being written more than two thousand years afterwards in a very remarkable manner. Some seventy years ago an English country gentleman named Mitford, who, like so many of his age, had been terrified into aristocratic opinions by the first French Revolution, suddenly found that the history of the Peloponnesian War was the reflex of his own time. He took up his Thucydides, and there he saw, as in a mirror, the progress and the struggles of his age. It required some freshness of mind to see this; at least, it had been hidden for many centuries. All the modern histories of Greece before Mitford had but the vaguest idea of it; and not being a man of supreme originality, he would doubtless have had very little idea of it either, except that the analogy of what he saw helped him by a telling object-lesson to the understanding of what he read. Just as in every country of Europe in 1793 there were two factions, one of the old-world aristocracy, and the other of the incoming democracy, just so there was in every city of ancient Greece, in the year 400 B.C., one party of the many and another of the few. This

Mr. Mitford perceived, and being a strong aristocrat, he wrote a 'history,' which is little except a party pamphlet, and which, it must be said, is even now readable on that very account. The vigour of passion with which it was written puts life into the words, and retains the attention of the reader. And that is not all. Mr. Grote, the great scholar whom we have had lately to mourn, also recognising the identity between the struggles of Athens and Sparta and the struggles of our modern world, and taking violently the contrary side to that of Mitford, being as great a democrat as Mitford was an aristocrat, wrote a reply, far above Mitford's history in power and learning, but being in its main characteristic almost identical, being above all things a book of vigorous political passion, written for persons who care for politics, and not, as almost all histories of antiquity are and must be, the book of a man who cares for scholarship more than for anything else, written mainly if not exclusively, for scholars. And the effect of fundamental political discussion was the same in ancient as in modern times. The whole customary ways of thought were at once shaken by it, and shaken not only in the closets of philosophers, but in the common thought and daily business of ordinary men. The 'liberation of humanity,' as Goethe used to call it — the deliverance of men from the yoke of inherited usage, and of rigid, unquestionable law — was begun in Greece, and had many of its greatest effects, good and evil, on Greece. It is just because of the analogy between the controversies of that time and those of our times that some one has said, 'Classical history is a part of modern history; it is mediæval history only which is ancient.'

If there had been no discussion of principle in Greece, probably she would still have produced works of art. Homer contains no such discussion. The speeches in the 'Iliad,' which Mr. Gladstone, the most competent of living judges, maintains to be the finest ever composed by man, are not discussions of principle. There is no more tendency in them to

critical disquisition than there is to political economy. In Herodotus you have the beginning of the age of discussion. He belongs in his essence to the age which is going out. He refers with reverence to established ordinance and fixed religion. Still, in his travels through Greece, he must have heard endless political arguments; and accordingly you can find in his book many incipient traces of abstract political disquisition. The discourses on democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, which he puts into the mouth of the Persian conspirators when the monarchy was vacant, have justly been called absurd, as speeches supposed to have been spoken by those persons. No Asiatic ever thought of such things. You might as well imagine Saul or David speaking them as those to whom Herodotus attributes them. They are Greek speeches, full of free Greek discussion, and suggested by the experience, already considerable, of the Greeks in the results of discussion. The age of debate is beginning, and even Herodotus, the least of a wrangler of any man, and the most of a sweet and simple narrator, felt the effect. When we come to Thucydides, the results of discussion are as full as they have ever been; his light is pure, 'dry light,' free from the 'humours' of habit, and purged from consecrated usage. As Grote's history often reads like a report to Parliament, so half Thucydides reads like a speech, or materials for a speech, in the Athenian Assembly. Of later times it is unnecessary to speak. Every page of Aristotle and Plato bears ample and indelible trace of the age of discussion in which they lived; and thought cannot possibly be freer. The deliverance of the speculative intellect from traditional and customary authority was altogether complete.

No doubt the 'detachment' from prejudice, and the subjection to reason, which I ascribe to ancient Athens, only went down a very little way among the population of it. Two great classes of the people, the slaves and women, were almost excluded from such qualities; even the free population doubtless

contained a far greater proportion of very ignorant and very superstitious persons than we are in the habit of imagining. We fix our attention on the best specimens of Athenian culture — on the books which have descended to us, and we forget that the corporate action of the Athenian people at various critical junctures exhibited the most gross superstition. Still, as far as the intellectual and cultivated part of society is concerned, the triumph of reason was complete; the minds of the highest philosophers were then as ready to obey evidence and reason as they have ever been since; probably they were more ready. The rule of custom over them at least had been wholly broken, and the primary conditions of intellectual progress were in that respect satisfied.

It may be said that I am giving too much weight to the classical idea of human development; that history contains the record of another progress as well; that in a certain sense there was progress in Judæa as well as in Athens. And unquestionably there was progress, but it was only progress upon a single subject. If we except religion and omit also all that the Jews had learned from foreigners, it may be doubted if there be much else new between the time of Samuel and that of Malachi. In religion there was progress, but without it there was not any. This was due to the cause of that progress. All over antiquity, all over the East, and over other parts of the world which preserve more or less nearly their ancient condition, there are two classes of religious teachers — one, the priests, the inheritors of past accredited inspiration; the other, the prophet, the possessor of a like present inspiration. Curtius describes the distinction well in relation to the condition of Greece with which history first presents us: —

'The mantic art is an institution totally different from the priesthood. It is based on the belief that the gods are in constant proximity to men, and in their government of the world, which comprehends every thing both great and small, will

not disdain to manifest their will; nay, it seems necessary that, whenever any hitch has arisen in the moral system of the human world, this should also manifest itself by some sign in the world of nature, if only mortals are able to understand and avail themselves of these divine hints.

'For this a special capacity is requisite; not a capacity which can be learnt like a human art or science, but rather a peculiar state of grace in the case of single individuals and single families whose ears and eyes are opened to the divine revelations and who participate more largely than the rest of mankind in the divine spirit. Accordingly it is their office and calling to assert themselves as organs of the divine will; they are justified in opposing their authority to every power of the world. On this head conflicts were unavoidable, and the reminiscences living in the Greek people, of the agency of a Tiresias and Calchas, prove how the Heroic kings experienced not only support and aid, but also opposition and violent protests, from the mouths of the men of prophecy.'

In Judæa there was exactly the same opposition as elsewhere. All that is new comes from the prophets; all which is old is retained by the priests. But the peculiarity of Judæa — a peculiarity which I do not for a moment pretend that I can explain — is that the prophetic revelations are, taken as a whole, indisputably improvements; that they contain, as time goes on, at each succeeding epoch, higher and better views of religion. But the peculiarity is not to my present purpose. My point is that there is no such spreading impetus in progress thus caused as there is in progress caused by discussion. To receive a particular conclusion upon the *ipse dixit*, upon the accepted authority of an admired instructor, is obviously not so vivifying to the argumentative and questioning intellect as to argue out conclusions for yourself. Accordingly the religious progress caused by the prophets did not break down that ancient code of authoritative usage. On the contrary, the two combined.

In each generation the conservative influence 'built the sepulchres' and accepted the teaching of past prophets, even while it was slaying and persecuting those who were living. But discussion and customs cannot be thus combined; their 'method,' as modern philosophers would say, is antagonistic. Accordingly, the progress of the classical states gradually awakened the whole intellect; that of Judæa was partial and improved religion only. And, therefore, in a history of intellectual progress, the classical fills the superior and the Jewish the inferior place; just as in a special history of theology only, the places of the two might be interchanged.

A second experiment has been tried on the same subject-matter. The characteristic of the Middle Ages may be approximately — though only approximately — described as a return to the period of authoritative usage and as an abandonment of the classical habit of independent and self-choosing thought. I do not for an instant mean that this is an exact description of the main mediæval characteristic; nor can I discuss how far that characteristic was an advance upon those of previous times; its friends say it is far better than the peculiarities of the classical period; its enemies that it is far worse. But both friends and enemies will admit that the most marked feature of the Middle Ages may roughly be described as I have described it. And my point is that just as this mediæval characteristic was that of a return to the essence of the customary epoch which had marked the pre-Athenian times, so it was dissolved much in the same manner as the influence of Athens, and other influences like it, claim to have dissolved that customary epoch.

The principal agent in breaking up the persistent mediæval customs, which were so fixed that they seemed likely to last for ever, or till some historical catastrophe overwhelmed them, was the popular element in the ancient polity which was everywhere diffused in the Middle Ages. The Germanic tribes

brought with them from their ancient dwelling-place a polity containing, like the classical, a king, a council, and a popular assembly; and wherever they went, they carried these elements and varied them, as force compelled or circumstances required. As far as England is concerned, the excellent dissertations of Mr. Freeman and Mr. Stubbs have proved this in the amplest manner, and brought it home to persons who cannot claim to possess much antiquarian learning. The history of the English Constitution, as far as the world cares for it, is, in fact, the complex history of the popular element in this ancient polity, which was sometimes weaker and sometimes stronger, but which has never died out, has commonly possessed great though varying power, and is now entirely predominant. The history of this growth is the history of the English people; and the discussions about this constitution and the discussions within it, the controversies as to its structure and the controversies as to its true effects, have mainly trained the English political intellect, in so far as it is trained. But in much of Europe, and in England particularly, the influence of religion has been very different from what it was in antiquity. It has been an influence of discussion. Since Luther's time there has been a conviction more or less rooted, that a man may by an intellectual process think out a religion for himself, and that, as the highest of all duties, he ought to do so. The influence of the political discussion, and the influence of the religious discussion, have been so long and so firmly combined, and have so effectually enforced one another, that the old notions of loyalty, and fealty, and authority, as they existed in the Middle Ages, have now over the best minds almost no effect.

It is true that the influence of discussion is not the only force which has produced this vast effect. Both in ancient and in modern times other forces co-operated with it. Trade, for example, is obviously a force which has done much to bring men of different customs and different beliefs into close con-

tiguity, and has thus aided to change the customs and the beliefs of them all. Colonisation is another such influence: it settles men among aborigines of alien race and usages, and it commonly compels the colonists not to be over-strict in the choice of their own elements; they are obliged to coalesce with and 'adopt' useful bands and useful men, though their ancestral customs may not be identical, nay, though they may be, in fact, opposite to their own. In modern Europe, the existence of a cosmopolite Church, claiming to be above nations, and really extending through nations, and the scattered remains of Roman law and Roman civilisation co-operated with the liberating influence of political discussion. And so did other causes also. But perhaps in no case have these subsidiary causes alone been able to generate intellectual freedom; certainly in all the most remarkable cases the influence of discussion has presided at the creation of that freedom, and has been active and dominant in it.

No doubt apparent cases of exception may easily be found. It may be said that in the court of Augustus there was much general intellectual freedom, an almost entire detachment from ancient prejudice, but that there was no free political discussion at all. But, then, the ornaments of that time were derived from a time of great freedom: it was the republic which trained the men whom the empire ruled. The close congregation of most miscellaneous elements under the empire, was, no doubt, of itself unfavourable to inherited prejudice, and favourable to intellectual exertion. Yet, except in the instance of the Church, which is a peculiar subject that requires a separate discussion, how little was added to what the republic left! The power of free interchange of ideas being wanting, the ideas themselves were barren. Also, no doubt, much intellectual freedom may emanate from countries of free political discussion, and penetrate to countries where that discussion is limited. Thus the intellectual freedom of France in the eighteenth

century was in great part owing to the proximity of and incessant intercourse with England and Holland. Voltaire resided among us; and every page of the 'Esprit des Lois' proves how much Montesquieu learned from living here. But, of course, it was only part of the French culture which was so derived: the germ might be foreign, but the tissue was native. And very naturally, for it would be absurd to call the *ancien régime* a government without discussion: discussion abounded there, only, by reason of the bad form of the government, it was never sure with ease and certainty to affect political action. The despotism 'tempered by epigram,' was a government which permitted argument of licentious freedom within changing limits, and which was ruled by that argument spasmodically and practically, though not in name or consistently.

But though in the earliest and in the latest time government by discussion has been a principal organ for improving mankind, yet, from its origin, it is a plant of singular delicacy. At first the chances are much against its living. In the beginning, the members of a free state are of necessity few. The essence of it requires that discussion shall be brought home to those members. But in early time, when writing is difficult, reading rare, and representation undiscovered, those who are to be guided by the discussion must hear it with their own ears, must be brought face to face with the orator, and must feel his influence for themselves. The first free states were little towns, smaller than any political division which we now have, except the Republic of Andorre, which is a sort of vestige of them. It is in the market-place of the country town, as we should now speak, and in petty matters concerning the market-town, that discussion began, and thither all the long train of its consequences may be traced back. Some historical inquirers, like myself, can hardly look at such a place without some sentimental musing, poor and trivial as the thing seems. But such small towns are very feeble. Numbers in the earliest wars, as in the latest, are a main source

of victory. And in early times one kind of state is very common and is exceedingly numerous. In every quarter of the globe we find great populations compacted by traditional custom and consecrated sentiment, which are ruled by some soldier — generally some soldier of a foreign tribe, who has conquered them, and, as it has been said, 'vaulted on the back' of them, or whose ancestors have done so. These great populations, ruled by a single will, have, doubtless, trodden down and destroyed innumerable little cities who were just beginning their freedom.

In this way the Greek cities in Asia were subjected to the Persian Power, and so *ought* the cities in Greece proper to have been subjected also. Every schoolboy must have felt that nothing but amazing folly and unmatched mismanagement saved Greece from conquest both in the time of Xerxes and in that of Darius. The fortunes of intellectual civilisation were then at the mercy of what seems an insignificant probability. If the Persian leaders had only shown that decent skill and ordinary military prudence which it was likely they would show, Grecian freedom would have been at an end. Athens, like so many Ionian cities on the other side of the Ægean, would have been absorbed into a great despotism; all we now remember her for we should not remember, for it would never have occurred. Her citizens might have been ingenious, and imitative, and clever; they could not certainly have been free and original. Rome was preserved from subjection to a great empire by her fortunate distance from one. The early wars of Rome are with cities like Rome — about equal in size, though inferior in valour. It was only when she had conquered Italy that she began to measure herself against Asiatic despotisms. She became great enough to beat them before she advanced far enough to contend with them. But such great good fortune was and must be rare. Unnumbered little cities which might have rivalled Rome or Athens doubtless perished without a sign long before history

was imagined. The small size and slight strength of early free states made them always liable to easy destruction.

And their internal frailty is even greater. As soon as discussion begins the savage propensities of men break forth; even in modern communities, where those propensities, too, have been weakened by ages of culture, and repressed by ages of obedience, as soon as a vital topic for discussion is well started the keenest and most violent passions break forth. Easily destroyed as are early free states by forces from without, they are even more liable to destruction by forces from within.

On this account such states are very rare in history. Upon the first view of the facts a speculation might even be set up that they were peculiar to a particular race. By far the most important free institutions, and the only ones which have left living representatives in the world, are the offspring either of the first constitutions of the classical nations or of the first constitutions of the Germanic nations. All living freedom runs back to them, and those truths which at first sight would seem the whole of historical freedom, can be traced to them. And both the Germanic and the classical nations belong to what ethnologists call the Aryan race. Plausibly it might be argued that the power of forming free states was superior in and peculiar to that family of mankind. But unfortunately for this easy theory the facts are inconsistent with it. In the first place, all the so-called Aryan race certainly is not free. The eastern Aryans — those, for example, who speak languages derived from the Sanscrit — are amongst the most slavish divisions of mankind. To offer the Bengalese a free constitution, and to expect them to work one, would be the maximum of human folly. There then must be something else besides Aryan descent which is necessary to fit men for discussion and train them for liberty; and, what is worse for the argument we are opposing, some non-Aryan races have been capable of freedom. Carthage, for example, was a Semitic republic. We do not know

all the details of its constitution, but we know enough for our present purpose. We know that it was a government in which many proposers took part, and under which discussion was constant, active, and conclusive. No doubt Tyre, the parent city of Carthage, the other colonies of Tyre besides Carthage, and the colonies of Carthage, were all as free as Carthage. We have thus a whole group of ancient republics of non-Aryan race, and one which, being more ancient than the classical republics, could not have borrowed from or imitated them. So that the theory which would make government by discussion the exclusive patrimony of a single race of mankind is on the face of it untenable.

I am not prepared with any simple counter theory. I cannot profess to explain completely why a very small minimum of mankind were, as long as we know of them, possessed of a polity which as time went on suggested discussions of principle, and why the great majority of mankind had nothing like it. This is almost as hopeless as asking why Milton was a genius and why Bacon was a philosopher. Indeed it is the same, because the causes which give birth to the startling varieties of individual character, and those which give birth to similar varieties of national character, are, in fact, the same. I have, indeed, endeavoured to show that a marked type of individual character once originating in a nation and once strongly preferred by it, is likely to be fixed on it and to be permanent in it, from causes which were stated. Granted the beginning of the type, we may, I think, explain its development and aggravation; but we cannot in the least explain why the incipient type of curious characters broke out, if I may so say, in one place rather than in another. Climate and 'physical' surroundings, in the largest sense, have unquestionably much influence; they are one factor in the cause, but they are not the only factor; for we find most dissimilar races of men living in the same climate and affected by the same surroundings, and we have every

reason to believe that those unlike races have so lived as neighbours for ages. The cause of types must be something outside the tribe acting on something within — something inherited by the tribe. But what that something is I do not know that any one can in the least explain.

The following conditions may, I think, be historically traced to the nation capable of a polity, which suggests principles for discussion, and so leads to progress. First, the nation must possess the *patria potestas* in some form so marked as to give family life distinctness and precision, and to make a home education and a home discipline probable and possible. While descent is traced only through the mother, and while the family is therefore a vague entity, no progress to a high polity is possible. Secondly, that polity would seem to have been created very gradually; by the aggregation of families into clans or *gentes*, and of clans into nations, and then again by the widening of nations, so as to include circumjacent outsiders, as well as the first compact and sacred group — the number of parties to a discussion was at first augmented very slowly. Thirdly, the number of 'open' subjects — as we should say now-a-days — that is, of subjects on which public opinion was optional, and on which discussion was admitted, was at first very small. Custom ruled everything originally, and the area of free argument was enlarged but very slowly. If I am at all right, that area could be only enlarged thus slowly, for custom was in early days the cement of society, and if you suddenly questioned such custom you would destroy society. But though the existence of these conditions may be traced historically, and though the reason of them may be explained philosophically, they do not completely solve the question why some nations have the polity and some not; on the contrary, they plainly leave a large 'residual phenomenon' unexplained and unknown.

THE SCIENTIFIC MOVEMENT AND LITERATURE [1]

Edward Dowden

(1843–1913)

[Edward Dowden, born in Cork and for long professor of English Literature at the University of Dublin, takes rank with Matthew Arnold, Walter Pater, and John Addington Symonds as one of the most able and stimulating of modern critics. Himself a poet in his youth, he possessed an admirable aptitude for the appreciation and judgment of poetry. He is most distinguished as an editor and interpreter of Shakespeare, but has also been of signal service as an editor and biographer of Shelley and of Southey, as a biographer of Browning, and as an editor of Wordsworth. His contributions to literary criticism have been far-reaching, including essays upon many poets and prose writers of large significance in various times and countries. One of his chief beliefs was that there should be no line of demarcation between literature and practical life, and though primarily a writer, he served also with distinction as commissioner of education for Ireland, and in other important capacities as a leader in Irish affairs won high esteem.

The present essay, written in 1877, excellently illustrates the gracefulness, the vigor, and the concrete clarity of Professor Dowden's style, as well as his critical insight and poise. The amazing disclosures of science which had been troubling Europe and America for more than a generation and demanding a reconstruction of beliefs and attitudes respecting nature, man, and religion, are welcomed by Dowden as the purveyors of ideas of immense significance for "the imagination and the emotions of men." It is his conviction that the light of science should give us wisdom and courage in the search for truth — a search demanding that poetry, prose fiction, and all other forms of art shall keep themselves in harmony with the changing conceptions of the intellect.]

Any inquiry at the present day into the relations of modern scientific thought with literature must in great part be guided

[1] From *Studies in Literature, 1789–1877*, 4th edition, London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Company, 1887. The volume was first issued in 1878.

by hints, signs, and presages. The time has not yet come when it may be possible to perceive in complete outline the significance of science for the imagination and the emotions of men, but that the significance is large and deep we cannot doubt. Literature proper, indeed, the literature of *power*, as De Quincey named it, in distinction from the literature of *knowledge*, may, from one point of view, be described as essentially non-scientific, and even anti-scientific. To ascertain and communicate facts is the object of science; to quicken our life into a higher consciousness through the feelings is the function of art. But though knowing and feeling are not identical, and a fact expressed in terms of feeling affects us as other than the same fact expressed in terms of knowing, yet our emotions rest on and are controlled by our knowledge. Whatever modifies our intellectual conceptions powerfully, in due time affects art powerfully. With its exquisite sensibilities, indifferent to nothing far off or near which can exalt a joy, or render pain more keen or prolonged, art is aroused by every discovery of new fact, every modification of old theory, which in open or occult ways can enter into connection with human emotion.

If, then, our views of external nature, of man, his past history, his possible future, — if our conceptions of God and His relation to the universe are being profoundly modified by science, it may be taken for certain that art must in due time put itself in harmony with the altered conceptions of the intellect. A great poet is great, and possesses a sway over the spirits of men, because he has perceived vividly some of the chief facts of the world and the main issues of life, and received powerful impressions from these. He is, therefore, deeply concerned about truth, and in his own fashion is a seeker for truth. When, in an age of incoherent systems and dissolving faiths, artists devote themselves, as they say, to art for art's sake, and their ideal of beauty ceases to be the emanation or irradiated form of justice, of charity, and of truth, it is because in such a period no great art is possible,

and art works, as Comte has well said, only "to keep its own high order of faculties from atrophy and oblivion:" —

> "There tiny pleasures occupy the place
> Of glories and of duties, as the feet
> Of fabled fairies, when the sun goes down,
> Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day." [1]

Persons who are exclusively intellectual, and have no feeling for art, often seem to suppose that while science delights in what is clear and definite, poetry and art delight in what is vague and dim; that these things, so agreeable to a class of gentle lunatics, are a certain preserved extract of moonshine and mist; and it is somewhat ludicrous to take note of the generous and condescending admissions in favour of a "refining" influence of poetry which are ordinarily made by such hard-headed persons. "I do not know what poetical is; is it honest in deed and word? is it a true thing?" So Audrey questions, and Touchstone answers with a twinkle of pleasure (being in luck to find such a chance of gracious fooling), "No truly, for the truest poetry is the most feigning." However this may be, whether we agree or not with Jeremy Bentham and Touchstone that "all poetry is misrepresentation," it is certain that the greatest poets love comprehensiveness, and definiteness in their conceptions. The measureless value set by every great artist upon execution favours this tendency. Intense vision renders precise and definite whatever is capable of becoming so, and leaves vague only that which is vague in its very nature. "The great and golden rule of art as well as of life," wrote William Blake, "is this, — that the more distinct, sharp, and wiry the bounding-line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling. Great inventors in all ages knew this. . . . Raphael and Michael Angelo and Albert Dürer are known by this, and this alone."

[1] Landor's lines, descriptive of the debasement of a land or time which freedom does not ennoble.

Apt illustrations of the artist's love of definite conceptions are afforded by the great epic of mediæval Catholicism, and by the great epic of the Puritan poet of England. There is not a rood of Dante's wonderful journey which we might not lay down as upon a map. The deepest anguish, the most mystical ecstasy of love, repose on a kind of geometry. Precisely in the centre of the universe abides the earth; precisely in the midst of the hemisphere of land is placed Jerusalem. Hell descends through its circles, with their rings and pits, to that point, exactly below Jerusalem, where Lucifer emerging from the ice grinds between his teeth the traitors against Christ and against the Emperor. As the precise antipodes to the inhabitants of Jerusalem climb from terrace to terrace the wayfarers upon the Purgatorial mount. Precisely above the mount, beyond the planetary heavens and crystalline sphere, in the midpoint of the Rose of the Blessed, is the centre of the lake of the light of God; and yet higher, circled by the nine angelic orders, dwells God himself, the uncreated and infinite. Everything is conceived with perfect definiteness, and everything cosmical subserves the theology and ethics of the poem. God is not in immediate relation with our earth; there is a stupendous hierarchy through which the divine power is transmitted. Seraphim draw Godwards the cherubim, the cherubim draw the thrones, and each angelic order imparts its motion to the earth-encircling sphere which is correspondent to its influence. Such a poem could not have been written in an age when a divorce existed between the reason and the imagination. It is a harmony of philosophy, physics, and poetry. In it the mystical ardour of St. Bonaventura, the sobriety and precision of St. Thomas Aquinas, quicken, sustain, and regulate the flight of the great poet's imagination.

Milton was less fortunate than Dante. We are presented, in Milton's case, as his most recent editor notes, "with the interesting phenomenon of a mind apparently uncertain to the last

which of the two systems, the Ptolemaic or the Copernican, was the true one, or perhaps beginning to be persuaded of the higher probability of the Copernican, but yet retaining the Ptolemaic for poetical purposes." Two passages — one a long passage, where the subject is discussed in detail by Adam and the affable archangel — were deliberately inserted by Milton "to relieve his own mind on the subject, and by way of caution to the reader that the scheme of the physical universe, actually adopted in the construction of the poem, needed not to be taken as more than a hypothesis for the imagination.[1] Milton's serious concern about scientific truth, and Milton's demand for imaginative distinctness and definiteness, are alike apparent. The Copernican astronomy was already possessing itself of the intellect of the time, but the imagination was as yet too little familiar with it to permit of Milton's accepting it as the foundation of his poetical scheme of things. He, like Dante, needed a strong framework for the wonder and beauty of his poem. Infinite space, bounded for the convenience of our imagination into a circle, is equally divided between heaven and chaos. Satan and his angelic followers rebel; the Messiah rides against them in His chariot; heaven's crystal wall rolls in, and the rebel spirits are driven down to that nether segment of chaos prepared for them, which is hell. Forthwith advances from heaven the Son of God, entering the wild of chaos on His creative errand. He marks with golden compass the bounds of the world or starry universe, which hangs pendent

> "in bigness like a star
> Of smallest magnitude close by the moon."

Over its dark outside sweep the blustering winds of chaos; within, wheels orb encircling orb, and in its midst the centre of the starry universe, our little earth, is fixed. In this scheme there is united an astronomical system, now obsolete, with con-

[1] *Milton's Poetical Works*, edited by David Masson.

ceptions which the poet made use of not as scientifically but as symbolically true.

These illustrations of the desire felt by great artists for imaginative clearness and definiteness have led us in the direction of one side of our more proper subject, and we might naturally now go on to ask, How have the alterations in our cosmical conceptions effected by science manifested themselves in literature? But a difficulty suggests itself which it may be worth while to consider. As regards external nature, the materials for the poet's and artist's use are given by the senses, and no scientific truth, no discovery of the intellect, can effect any alteration in the appearance of things, in which lies the truth for the senses. However the Copernican theory may have been verified, still to our eyes each morning the sun rises over the eastern hills, each evening our eyes behold him sinking down the west. So it has been from the first, so it must be to the end. No one of course will question that the appearances of things as presented by the senses — when once the senses are developed[1] — remain, if not absolutely yet for the most part constant, and are unaffected by the rectification by science of our mode of conceiving them. But from the first the mere visible presentation was associated with an ideal element. For the eye confers as well as receives, and the vision of the world to a man and to a monkey must differ, whether or not the structure of the crystalline lens and the optic nerve be identical in the two. There is an ideal element, an invisible element which unites itself to our perceptions, and while the element which may be called the material one remains constant, this ideal element is subject to continual variation and development. If our unrectified senses give seeming testimony to anything, it is to the fixity of the solid earth beneath our feet, and to the motion of the sun by day, and of stars by night, across the heavens. But the

[1] The growth of the sense of colour, within a period of which we possess literary memorials, affords a striking example of the developing sensibility of the eye.

knowledge that the earth's motionlessness is only apparent leaves scope for the play of an ideal element derived from the conception of its ceaseless revolution, its stupendous whirl; and the imagination by its unifying power can bring together the two apparently antagonistic elements — the seeming testimony of the senses, and its correction by the intellect — and can make both subservient to the purposes of the heart.

Let us take illustrations, slight and in small compass, yet sufficient to exemplify the process which has been described. Mr. Tennyson imagines a lover on the eve of his marriage-day. It is a slow-waning evening of summer. All nature seems to share in his calm plenitude of joy. Yet the ultimate fruition is not attained; still a short way forward lies the culmination. Joy is like a wave which has one glassy ascent and blissful fall to make before it is perfected. What if that wave were suddenly frozen by some icy wind, and fixed in mockery just short of its be-all and end-all? The idea of advance, of motion calm and sustained, is demanded by the imagination, and this motion must be common to the individual human creature, and to the world of which he is a part. And the whole world *is* in effect calmly revolving into day: —

"Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow:
From fringes of the faded eve,
O happy planet, eastward go;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

"Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage morn,
And round again to happy night."

One more example of the perfect use by the imagination, for the service of the feelings, of a suggestion of science. Again it

is the conception of the revolving earth, with its unceasing monotony of motion, which asserts a power to exalt and vivify human passion. But now instead of the mystery of life, and the calm of the climbing wave of joy, we are in presence of the imperious suspension of death, the obstruction and sterility of the grave. A spirit and a woman has become a clod. She who had been a motion and a breeze is one with the inert brute-matter of the globe, and as the earth whirls everlastingly, she too is whirled by a blind and passionless force: —

"A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears;
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

"No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees."

These are petty illustrations in comparison with the extent of the subject, but they suffice to show that the impression of the senses is capable of receiving modifications, or of being wholly replaced by an ideal conception. To a child in a railway carriage the trees appear to move rapidly past him; gradually the illusion submits to the correcting influence of ascertained fact; and at last it becomes difficult to enter again, even though an effort be made to do so, into the naïve error of the eye.[1]

But, beside the modification or replacement of the impressions of the senses by an ideal element, the cosmical ideas of modern science have in themselves an independent value for the imagination. Four particulars of these may be mentioned as especially important in their dealing with the imagination, which when taken together, have as enlarging and renewing a power as

[1] Some considerations of interest closely related with the foregoing will be found in Oersted's *The Soul in Nature*, under the headings, "The Comprehension of Nature by Thought and Imagination," and "The Relation between Natural Science and Poetry."

probably any conception of things material can have with the spirit of man. First, the vastness of the universe, and of the agencies at work in it; secondly, the idea of law; thirdly, the idea of *ensemble;* last, the ultimate of known ultimates is *force.*

The idea of mere physical vastness may appear at first sight to be a very barren possession for the human soul; but in reality it is not barren. We are conscious of a liberating and dilating emotion when we pass from channels and narrow seas into the space and roll of the Atlantic, or when we leave our suburban paddock, with its neat walks and trim flower-beds, and wade in a sea of heather upon the hills. Mr. Mill, looking back upon his visit in childhood to Ford Abbey in Devonshire, writes in his Autobiography, "This sojourn was, I think, an important circumstance in my education. Nothing contributes more to nourish elevation of sentiments in a people than the large and free character of their habitations." And assuredly, for one whose sanity of mind is not impaired, his habitation among these revolving worlds has a large and free character, and is fitted to nourish elevation of sentiments. The starry heaven, so deep and pure, beheld while the trivial incidents and accidents of our earth revealed by the daylight are absent, and the silence seems to expand over a vast space — this must always have been an object of awed contemplation. But a measure of the distance traversed by the human mind may be obtained by attempting once more really to submit the imagination to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. Under Dante's planetary spheres we move with some discomfort, we have flown in thought so freely and so far. The universe as arranged by the mediæval poet is indeed skilfully contrived, but the whole thing looks somewhat like an ingenious toy. For vast massing of light and darkness "Paradise Lost" can hardly be surpassed. While Milton's outward eye was active, it was charmed by the details of the sweet English landscape about Horton; when the drop serene had quenched his light, then the deep distances

of the Empyrean, of eternal Night, and of Chaos opened before him. But it is for spirit that Milton reserves all that is greatest in the ideas of force and motion. He is still, in the main, mediæval in his conception of the material cosmos. It needed for masters a Galileo, a Kepler, a Newton, to liberate and sustain the imagination for such a flight, so pauseless, so passionate, as that of the revolters against Deity, in Byron's dramatic mystery, among the innumerable fair revolving worlds: —

"O thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still increasing lights! what are ye? What
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aërial universe of endless
Expansion — at which my soul aches to think —
Intoxicated with eternity?
O God! O Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents; or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die as atoms die
(If that they die), or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit, let me expire, or see them nearer!
Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!
Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.
Lucifer. Look there!
Cain. I cannot see it.
Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.
Cain. That! — yonder!
Lucifer. Yea.
Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them."

The displacement of the earth from the centre of the universe, and its being launched into space as one of the least important of its brother wanderers around the sun, was followed by consequences for theology and morals as well as for poetry. The Church was right in her presentiment of a reformation, as alarming as that of Luther, about to be effected by science. The infallible authority of the Holy See was to be encountered by the infallible authority of the astronomer and his telescope; a new order of prophets, suitable to the West as the old prophets had been to the East, was about to arise, prophets who would speak what was given to them by observation and valid inference. And they declared — and men of the Renaissance listened gladly — that the legend was false which represented our earth as the centre of the spheres, and as the criminal who had destroyed the harmony of the worlds. The earth had heretofore possessed a supremacy over the stars which were set in heaven above her for signs and for seasons, but that supremacy had become one of misery and of shame; the terrestrial was corruptible; the celestial was incorruptible; a day was not far distant when the doom brought upon creation by the great traitor would come upon it. Now it was found that the earth was no leader of the starry choir who had marred the music but was indeed a singer in the glorious chant of energy and life; the heaven and the earth were fraternally united; terrestrial and celestial alike were subject to change; the whole universe was ever in process of *becoming*.

"The study of astrology," Mr. Lecky has said, "may perhaps be regarded as one of the last struggles of human egotism against the depressing sense of insignificance which the immensity of the universe must produce. And certainly," he goes on, "it would be difficult to conceive any conception more calculated to exalt the dignity of man than one which represents the career of each individual as linked with the march of worlds, the focus towards which the most sublime of created things continually

converge." It may be questioned whether man's dignity is not more exalted by conceiving him as part — a real though so small a part — of a great Cosmos, infinitely greater than he, than by placing him as king upon the throne of creation. For all creation dwarfs itself and becomes grotesque, as happens in the systems of astrology, to obey and flatter such a monarch. He who is born under Mars will be "Good to be a barboure and a blode letter, and to draw tethe." In the temple of the god in Chaucer's Knighte's Tale, the poet sees

> "The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
> The cook i-skalded, for al his longe ladel."

If man made the measure of the universe, the universe becomes a parish in which all the occupants are interested in each petty scandal. Who would not choose to be a citizen of a nobly-ordered commonwealth rather than to be lord of a petty clan?

Add to the conception of the vastness of the universe the idea of the unchanging uniformities, the regularity of sequence, the same consequents for ever following the same antecedents, the universal presence of law. Endless variety, infinite complexity, yet through all an order. To understand what appearance the world would present to the imagination of a people who gave law as small a place, and irregularity as large a place, as possible in their poetical conceptions of the universe we have but to turn to the "Arabian Nights." The God of Islam was wholly out of and above the world, and a belief in destiny was strangely united with the supposition of caprice, marvel, and surprise in nature. The presence of law is to be found in the "Arabian Nights" only in the perfect uniformity with which Shahrazád takes up her tale of marvel each night, and each night breaks it off in the midst. Whether a date-stone will produce a date, or will summon up a gigantic 'Efrete, whether a fish upon the frying-pan will submit to be fried, or will lift his head from the pan and address his cook, is entirely beyond the possibility of

prediction. Nature is a kind of Alhambra, "a brilliant dream, a caprice of the genii, who have made their sport with the network of stone," with the fantastic arabesques, the fringes, the flying lines.

Neither variety without unity, nor unity without variety, can content the imagination which is at one with the reason. The sole poet of our Western civilization who possessed a true synthetic genius in science, together with the artistic genius in its highest form — Goethe — represents in a well-known passage the Spirit of the Earth plying with ceaseless energy, with infinite complexity of action, yet to one harmonious result, the shuttles which we call causes, to weave the web of what we call effects; this is the true vision of the world to modern eyes: —

> "In life's full flood, and in action's storm,
> Up and down I wave;
> To and fro I sweep!
> Birth and the Grave,
> An eternal deep,
> A tissue flowing,
> A life all glowing,
> So I weave at the rattling loom of the years
> The garment of Life which the Godhead wears."

This conception of a reign of law amid which and under which we live, affects the emotions in various ways: at times it may cause despondency, but again it will correct this despondency and sustain the heart; now the tragical aspect will impress us of human will and passion contending with the great ἀνάγκη of the order of things, and again we shall more and more find occasion for joy and triumph in the co-operancy of the energies of humanity with those of the giant kindred, light, and motion, and heat, and electricity, and chemical affinity. Nor is this all: higher than the physical, we recognise a moral order to which we belong, the recognition of which cannot but produce in any mind that dwells upon it an emotion which would be intense if it

were not so massive, and of the nature of mysticism were it not in the highest degree inspired by reason.

But not only is nature everywhere constant, uniform, orderly in its operations; all its parts constitute a whole, an *ensemble*. Nothing is added: nothing can be lost. Our earth is no alien planet wandering nightwards to a destruction reserved for it alone. We look forth. "The moon approaches the earth by the same law that a stone falls to the ground. The spectrum of the sunbeam reveals the existence in the sun of the same metals and gases that we know on earth; nay, the distant fixed stars, the cloudy nebulæ, and the fleecy comet show the same. We watch the double stars, and find them circling round each other by the same law which regulates our solar planets. We are led irresistibly to conclude that the same consensus which we feel on earth reigns beyond the earth. . . . Everywhere throughout the universe — thus runs the speculation of science — organic or inorganic, lifeless or living, vegetable or animal, intellectual or moral, on earth or in the unknown and unimaginable life in the glittering worlds we gaze at with awe and delight, there is a consensus of action, an agreement, a oneness." [1] And what is the poet's confession? That the life of the least blossom in the most barren crevice is a portion of the great totality of being, that its roots are intertangled with the roots of humanity, that to give a full account of *it* would require a complete science of man, and a complete theology: —

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies: —
> Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
> Little flower — but if I could understand
> What you are, root and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is."

But perhaps no poetry expresses the cosmical feeling for nature, incarnated by a myth of the imagination in the language of

[1] A. J. Ellis: *Speculation, a Discourse.*

human passion, more wonderfully than the lyric dialogue which leads on to its close the last act of Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound." The poet does not here gaze with awe at the mystery of life in a tiny blossom, although that too opens into the infinite; it is the great lovers, the earth and his paramour the moon, who celebrate their joy. The Titan has been at last delivered from the chain and the winged hounds of Jupiter. The benefactor of mankind is free, and the day of the doom and death of tyranny is arrived. But it is not humanity alone which shall rejoice: the life of nature and the passion of man embrace with a genial vehemence: —

"*The Earth.* I spin beneath my pyramid of night,
Which points unto the heavens — dreaming delight,
Murmuring victorious joy in my enchanted sleep:
As a youth lulled in love-dreams faintly sighing,
Under the shadow of his beauty lying,
Which round his rest a watch of light and warmth doth keep.

"*The Moon.* As, in the soft and sweet eclipse,
When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,
High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes are dull;
So, when thy shadow falls on me,
Then am I mute and still, by thee
Covered; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,
Full, oh! too full!"

Such poetry as this is indeed what Wordsworth declared true poetry to be — the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge, the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science.[1]

All that can thus be gained by the imagination from true science, the imagination may appropriate and vivify for the heart of man, free from the fear that matter is about to encroach upon us on every quarter and engulf the soul. What is matter?

[1] Preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. For a stupendous example of the use made by poetry of the cosmical feeling for nature, see in Victor Hugo's new series of *La Légende des Siècles*, the concluding poem, entitled "Abîme."

and what is spirit? are questions which are alike unanswerable. Motion and thought, however they may be related as two sides or aspects of a single fact, must for ever remain incapable of identification with one another. When we have reduced to the simplest elements our conceptions of matter and of motion, we are at last brought back to force, the ultimate datum of consciousness: "And thus the force by which we ourselves produce changes, and which serves to symbolize the cause of changes, in general, is the final disclosure of analysis." The exclamation of Teufelsdröckh in his moment of mystic elevation, "Force, force, everywhere force; we ourselves a mysterious force in the centre of that," is but an anticipation of the last result of scientific thought. And when Teufelsdröckh in scorn of the pride of intellect which would banish mystery from the world and worship from the soul of man — when Teufelsdröckh declares, "The man who cannot wonder (and worship), were he President of innumerable Royal Societies, and carried the whole 'Mécanique Céleste' and 'Hegel's Philosophy,' and the epitome of all laboratories and observatories with their results, in his single head, is but a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye. Let those who have eyes look through him, then he may be useful;" what is this but an assertion, justified by the most careful analysis, that the highest truth of science and the highest truth of religion are one, and are both found in the confession of an inscrutable Power manifested to us through all external phenomena, and through our own intellect, affections, conscience, and will?

Such passages as have been quoted from Byron and Goethe and Shelley make clear to us what kind of scientific inquiry and scientific result is fruitful for the feelings and imaginations of men. Not the details of the specialist, but large *vues d'ensemble*. The former may help to produce such elaborate pseudo-poetry as part of Fletcher's "Purple Island" or Darwin's "Botanic Garden," in which the analytic intellect tricks itself

out with spangles of supposed poetical imagery and diction, looking in the end as grotesque as a skeleton bedizened for a ball-room. But the large *vues d'ensemble* arouse and free, and pass rapidly from the intellect to the emotions, the moral nature, and the imagination.

If the bounds of space have receded, and our place has been assigned to us in the great commonwealth of which we are members, the bounds of time have receded also; we have found our deep bond of relationship with all the past, and a vista for hopes, sober but well-assured, has been opened in the future. To trace one's ancestry to Adam is to confess oneself a *parvenu;* our cousin the gorilla has a longer family tree to boast. Six thousand years! — why, a fox could hardly trim his tail and become a dog in so brief a period. We are like voyagers upon a stream of which we have read accurate accounts in our geographies; it rose, we were told, a short way above the last river bend; it is abruptly stopped just beyond the approaching bluff. But now we ascertain that the waters have come from some mysterious source among strange mountains a thousand leagues away, and we are well assured that they will descend a thousand miles before they hear the voice of that mysterious sea in which they must be lost. Shall we, upon the breast of the waters, not feel a solemn awe, a solemn hope, when we meditate on the mighty past and muse of the great future? Shall we not bend our ear to catch among the ripples each whisper of the former things? Shall we not gaze forward with wistful eyes to see the wonders of the widening shores? And do we not feel with quickening consciousness from hour to hour the stronger flow and weightier mass of the descending torrent?

The vaster geological periods have made the period of human existence on the globe — vast as that is — seem of short duration. What is remote becomes near. We do not now waste our hearts in regret for an imaginary age of gold; we find a genuine pathos in the hard, rude lives, the narrow bounds of

knowledge, the primitive desires, the undeveloped awes and fears and shames, of our remote ancestors who, by their aspiring effort, shaped for us our fortunes. We almost join hands with them across the centuries. The ripples have hardly yet left the lake where some dweller upon piles dropped by chance his stone hatchet. The fire in the troglodyte's cave is not quite extinct. We hear the hiss in the milk-pail of some Aryan daughter, who may perhaps have had a curious likeness to our grandmother by Gainsborough. We still repeat the words of that perplexed progenitor who learned in dreams that his dead chieftain was not all extinct, nor have we yet satisfactorily solved his puzzle. When we sit in summer, in a glare that bewilders the brain, beside the bathing-machines and watch the children in knickerbockers and tunics engaged with their primitive architecture, which the next tide will wash away, we fall into a half-dream, and wake in alarm lest a horde of lean and fierce-eyed men and women may suddenly rush shorewards for their gorge of shell-fish, and in their orgasm of hunger may but too gladly lick up and swallow our babies! Forlorn and much-tried progenitors, wild human scarecrows on our bleak northern shores, we are no undutiful sons; we acknowledge our kinship; in your craving for an unattainable oyster, we recognize our own passion for the ideal; and in your torpid sullenness, when only shells were found, our own keener *Welt-Schmerz* and philosophies of despair!

In the history of the past of our globe, and the remote history of the human race, what are the chief inspiring ideas for literature? One, which is perhaps the most important idea of the scientific movement, receives here a striking illustration — the idea of the relative as opposed to the absolute; secondly, we may note the idea of heredity; thirdly, the idea of human progress, itself subordinate to the more comprehensive doctrine of evolution.

The general conclusion that all human knowledge is relative

may be deduced from the very nature of our intelligence. But beside the analytic proof that our cognitions never can be absolute, there is the subordinate historical evidence that as a fact they never have been such. Now, more than at any former time, we are impressed with a sense that the thought, the feeling, and the action of each period of history becomes intelligible only through a special reference to that period. Hence it is our primary object with regard to the past, not to oppose, not to defend, but to understand. Hence we shall look upon any factitious attempt to revive and restore the past as necessarily impotent, and of transitory significance. Hence we shall abstain from setting up absolute standards, and from pronouncing things good or evil in proportion as they approach or fall short of such standards. A new school of historians, a new school of critics, have applied in many and various directions this idea of historical relativity. Nor has it failed to exert an influence upon recent poetry. It has been remarked that the contempt for the past, characteristic of many eighteenth century thinkers, was a necessary stage in the progress of thought. When the breach with authority had taken place, it was at first natural that men should maintain their position of superiority by a vigorous denial of the claims of their predecessors. "Whatever was old was absurd, and 'Gothic,' an epithet applied to all mediæval art, philosophy, or social order, became a simple term of contempt. Though the sentiment may strike us as narrow-minded, it at least implied a distinct recognition of a difference between past and present. In simpler times, people imagined their forefathers to be made in their own likeness, and naïvely transferred the customs of chivalry to the classical or Hebrew histories. To realize the fact that the eighteenth century differed materially from the eighth, was a necessary step towards the modern theory of progressive development."[1] The spirit of antiquarian research revived in

[1] Leslie Stephen: *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century.*

the second half of the last century. Uniting with the historical spirit and a masculine force of imagination, it produced the romanticism of Scott. Uniting with the sentimental movement in Germany, it produced the romanticism of Tieck, Novalis, and Fouqué. From contempt for the Middle Ages, men passed into an exaggerated, fantastic devotion to whatever was, or was supposed to be, mediæval. Now, at length, we would approach the past neither as iconoclasts nor idolaters, but as scientific observers; we are not eager to applaud or revile before we understand; we do not for a moment desert our own place in our own century, but we have trained our imagination to employ itself in the service of history.

Among critics of literature and art, M. Taine, without himself possessing a delicate and flexible intelligence, has come prominently forward as the exponent of the æsthetics of the relative, in opposition to absolute systems of æsthetics, which absolve or condemn in accordance with standards conceived as invariable for all places and all times. Since the appearance of M. Taine's lectures on art, we have begun to suffer from a kind of critical cant drawn from science, and replacing the critical cant drawn from transcendental philosophy. If we are not so largely afflicted by the Ideal, the Beautiful, the Sublime, we could be content, perhaps, to hear a little less about the "organism" and its "environment." It is not sufficiently remembered that if we cannot attain to absolute standards of beauty, yet we can approximate to a standard in harmony with what, in every race and clime in which man has attained his normal development, has been highest in man. M. Taine, indeed, himself essayed to establish a scientific theory of the ideal, and happily forgot his early impartiality. We may, by a generous effort of imaginative sympathy, come to appreciate the feelings which would rise in the bosom of a South African upon sight of the Hottentot Venus; but we must return to the abiding conviction that the Venus of Melos is in truer accord

with the sense of beauty in man, although, upon testing our opinion by count of heads, we were to appear in a minority of one.

In harmony with this feeling for the historically relative, and also with the idea of progress, allowing as it does a right in its own place to each portion of the past, a poetry has appeared which, while remaining truly poetry, partakes of the critical, we might almost say the scientific, spirit with reference to past developments of the race, remote civilizations, and extinct religious faiths. The romantic poetry, to which things mediæval were so interesting, has thus been taken in and enclosed by a poetry which thinks nothing alien that is human, and interests itself in every age and every land, constituting thus a kind of imaginative criticism of religions, races, and civilizations. This direction in contemporary art is represented by the poet, excepting Victor Hugo, of highest distinction in France — Leconte de Lisle. His poetry, for the most part strictly objective, is not simply and frankly objective like the poetry of Scott, but rather sets itself down before some chosen object to make a complete imaginative study of it. Such poetry as this is not indicative of a retreat or recoil from our own time, as was the poetry of sentimental mediævalism; it is animated by an essentially modern motive.

The idea of transmission or heredity, over and above its purely scientific significance, has a significance in connection with morals which is of greater importance than any immediate value it has for the imagination. And yet this idea has been made a leading motive in a dramatic poem by a living writer, who unites the passion of a seeker for truth with the creative genius of a great artist. The central thought of "The Spanish Gypsy" has been so faithfully expressed by Mr. R. H. Hutton, in his admirable criticism of George Eliot, that we need not go beyond his words: —

"If I may venture to interpret so great a writer's thought, I should say that 'The Spanish Gypsy' is written to illustrate not merely doubly and

trebly, but from four or five distinct points of view, how the inheritance of the definite streams of impulse and tradition stored up in what we call race often puts a tragic veto upon any attempt of spontaneous individual emotion or volition to ignore or defy their control, and to emancipate itself from the tyranny of their disputable and apparently cruel rule. You can see the influence of the recent Darwinian doctrines, so far as they are applicable at all to moral characteristics and causes, in almost every page of the poem. How the threads of hereditary capacity and hereditary sentiment control, as with invisible cords, the orbits of even the most powerful characters, how the fracture of those threads, so far as it can be accomplished by mere *will*, may have even a greater effect in wrecking character than moral degeneracy would itself produce; how the man who trusts and uses the hereditary forces which natural descent has bestowed upon him becomes a might and a centre in the world, while the man, perhaps intrinsically the nobler, who dissipates his strength by trying to swim against the stream of his past, is neutralized and paralyzed by the vain effort; again, how a divided past, a past not really homogeneous, may weaken this kind of power, instead of strengthening it by the command of a larger experience — all this George Eliot's poem paints with a tragical force that answers to Aristotle's definition of tragedy, that which 'purifies' by pity and by fear."[1]

But if the stream of tendency descends to us with imperious force from remote regions, it advances broadening into the future. The idea of human progress has been so generative an idea in science, in historical literature, in politics, in poetry, that to indicate its leading developments would need very ample space. It is true that we anticipate a time when this earth will roll blind and cold around the sun, and all life upon our globe will be extinct. And the thought can hardly be other than a mournful one, calling for some stoical courage, to those persons whose creed it is that we are without warrant for believing that anything higher than humanity exists. If it were ascertained that a century hence the British nation would be utterly destroyed by calamitous overthrow, we might still resolve to help our nation to live nobly and perish heroically; but the enthusiasm would be stern rather than joyous. In the face of death, joy may remain for the individual through sympathy with the

[1] *Essays*. The idea of heredity has been made a motive in art, with closer reference to physiology, by the American poet and novelist, Dr. O. W. Holmes.

advance of his fellows, and in the thought that his deeds will live when he is himself resolved into nothingness. But how if the advance of humanity lead only to a dark pit of annihilation, and for humanity itself annihilation be attended by oblivion, and not even a subjective immortality be possible? Is it a matter for rejoicing that every day brings us nearer to this, the goal of progress? Just when all has been attained, all is to be forfeited. We can train our temper, if need be, to accept these things with equanimity; but can we celebrate with praise and joy this approaching consummation? Humanity flung into the grave, with no spices, no tender hands of mourners, no tears of loving remembrance, no friend nor even a foe, and never an Easter morning! Is such a vision of the future so incomparable a substitute for the tender myths of the past?

The idea of human progress — itself subordinate to the conception of evolution — is the only one of scientific ideas of comparatively recent date which has been long enough in the air to become a portion of the life of societies, and hence it alone has become a great inspiring force with literature. To trace the sources and the early movements of a philosophy of history, to follow its subsequent career from Bossuet to Buckle, would be an enterprise full of interest and of utility; and as far as France and England are concerned, this has been ably accomplished by Professor Flint. The popular imagination was scarcely affected by the idea of progress until toward the close of the eighteenth century, when a new millennium seemed to be inaugurated by the French Revolution. In English poetry it did not manifest itself powerfully until it became the inspiration of the writings of Shelley. And in Shelley's poetry the idea of progress appears as a glorious apparition rather than as a substantial reality; it appears like the witch in "Manfred" beneath the sun-bow of the torrent, and here the torrent is the French Revolution. For the idea of progress with Shelley was the revolutionary, not the scientific idea. Among the chief democratic writers

of Europe — with Victor Hugo, George Sand, Lamennais, Quinet, Michelet, Mazzini, and others — the idea has had something of the force of a new religion. And in some, at least, of these writers the passionate aspect of the revolutionary conception of progress associates itself with the sustaining and controlling power of the scientific idea.

By Shelley and the revolutionary spirits a breach is made with the past — the world is to start afresh from 1789, or some other Year One; before that date appear the monstrous forms of tyrannies and superstitions which "tare each other in their slime;" then of a sudden were born light and love, freedom and truth: —

> "This is the day which down the void abysm,
> At the Earth-born's spell, yawns for Heaven's despotism,
> And conquest is dragged captive through the deep,
> Love from its awful throne of patient power
> In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
> Of dread endurance, from the slippery steep,
> And narrow verge of crag-like agony springs,
> And folds over the world its healing wings."

Such is the revolutionary idea of progress. In English poetry the scientific idea hardly appears earlier than in Mr. Tennyson's writings, and certainly nowhere in English poetry does it obtain a more faithful and impressive rendering. Mr. Tennyson has none of the passion which makes the political enthusiast, none of the winged spiritual ardour which is proper to the poet of transcendentalism. But his poetry exhibits a well-balanced moral nature, strong human affections, and, added to these, such imaginative sympathy as a poet who is not himself capable of scientific thought may have with science, a delight in all that is nobly ordered, and a profound reverence for law. When dark fears assail him, and it is science that inspires and urges on such fears, Mr. Tennyson does not confront them, as Mr. Browning might, armed with the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith, which that militant transcendental poet knows

so well to put to use. Mr. Tennyson flies for refuge to the citadel of the heart: —

> "A warmth within the breast would melt
> The freezing reason's colder part,
> And, like a man in wrath, the heart
> Stood up, and answered, 'I have felt.'"

And as Mr. Tennyson does not oppose to the said inductions of the understanding some assertion of truth transcendental, so in his hopes for the future he is not carried away by the divine μανία of the worshippers of Revolution.

The idea of progress, which occupies so large a place in Mr. Tennyson's poetry, is more than non-revolutionary; it is even anti-revolutionary. His imagination dwells with a broad and tranquil pleasure upon whatever is justified by the intellect and the conscience, and continuously energetic within determined bounds. If Mr. Browning had written an epic of Arthur, we can hardly doubt that he would have found a centre for his poem in the Grail, which would never have been attained, not even by Galahad, but the very failure to attain which would have stimulated renewed effort and aspiration, and thus have proved the truest success. The quest for something perfect, divine, unattainable, or if attainable then unsatisfying, secures, in Mr. Browning's view, the highest gain which this life can yield to man. Mr. Tennyson brings into prominence the circumstance — found in his mediæval sources — that it is the rashly undertaken quest of the Grail that "unsolders the noblest fellowship of knights," and brings in the flood of disaster. Dutiful activity in the sphere of the practical appears to Mr. Tennyson so much more needed by the world than to seek oversoon for a mystical vision of things divine. No true reformation was ever sudden; let us innovate like nature and like time. Men may rise to higher things, not on wings, but on "Stepping-stones of their dead selves." It is "from prec-

edent to precedent" that freedom "slowly broadens down," not by extravagant outbursts of "the red fool-fury of the Seine." The growth of individual character, the growth of national well-being, the development of the entire human race from animality and primitive barbarism — each of these, if it be sound, cannot but be slow and gradual. It is our part to co-operate with the general progressive tendency of the race: —

> "Arise and fly
> The reeling faun, the sensual feast:
> Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die."

Great sorrows, like the storms which blew upon our globe while in process of cooling, are a portion of the divine order, and fulfil their part in the gradual course of our development; such is the truth found, through pain and through endurance, in the "In Memoriam." Let science grow from more to more; let political organizations be carefully amended and improved; let man advance in self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, and so from decade to decade, from century to century, will draw nearer that "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

With faith in the future equal to that of Mr. Tennyson, and a more loving attachment to the past, founded in part upon those tender, pathetic ties which make imperfection dear, George Eliot, in her conception of human progress, is also anti-revolutionary. We advance from out the past, but we bear with us a precious heritage. To suppose, as Shelley supposed, that we can move in this world by the light of reason alone, is a delusion of the Revolution in its passionate scorn of foregone ages; we need the staff of tradition as well as the lamp of reason. What is our faith in the future but

> "the rushing and expanding stream
> Of thought, of feeling fed by all the past?"

What is our finest hope but finest memory? The conservative instincts of George Eliot as an artist have been nourished by the scientific doctrine with reference to the transmission of an inheritance accumulating through the generations of mankind. And for the very reason that she so profoundly reverences the past, she is inspired with a great presentiment of the future: —

> "Presentiment of better things on earth
> Sweeps in with every force that stirs our souls
> To admiration, self-renouncing love,
> Or thoughts, like light, that bind the world in one:
> Sweeps like the sense of vastness, when at night
> We hear the roll and dash of waves that break
> Nearer and nearer with the rushing tide,
> Which rises to the level of the cliff,
> Because the wide Atlantic rolls behind
> Throbbing respondent to the far-off orbs."

A Parisian coterie of literary artists, whose art possessed no social feeling, and who took for their *drapeau* the words, "L'art pour l'art," found progress a piece of the boredom of *bourgeois* enthusiasm. It was natural, for in themselves there was nothing to create the presentiment of a future of glories and of duties. A silkworm enclosed in the delicate cocoon it has spun is insensible to the winds of change, and probably has no very vivid anticipation of the little flutter of potential wings.

Mr. Tennyson's words, "move upward, working out the beast," suggest the inquiry whether the scientific movement has modified, or is now modifying, our moral conceptions. If it be so, the altered point of view must be discoverable through the work of great artists, for there are few great artists who are not indirectly great ethical teachers, or, if not teachers, inspirers. And it is obvious that scientific habits of thought must dispose men to seek for a natural rather than a miraculous or traditional foundation for morality, to seek for natural rather than arbitrary standards of right and wrong, and to dwell chiefly on the natural sanctions attached to well-doing and evil-

doing. The ancient law-givers received their authority and their code by special interposition, near secret stream, or on open mountain-top. We look for ours in the heart of man, and through the observation of social phenomena. Not less, but more than Dante, we know for certain that there are a Heaven and a Hell — a heaven in the presence of light and blessing when a good deed has been done; a hell in the debasement of self, in the dark heart able no longer *vivre au grand jour*, in the consciousness of treason against our fellows, in the sense that we have lowered the nobler tradition of humanity, in the knowledge that consequence pursues consequence with a deadly efficiency far beyond our power of restraining, or even reaching them. The assurance that we live under a reign of natural law enforces upon us with a solemn joy and an abiding fear the truth that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap; and if he sow for others (and who does not?), others must reap of his sowing, tares of tares, and wheat of wheat.

A recent critic concludes his studies of the Greek poets with a remarkable chapter which is an expansion of the thought that the true formula for the conduct of life in our modern world is no other than the old formula of Greek philosophy *ζῆν κατὰ φύσιν*, to live according to nature. The words might be accepted as our rule, if "nature" be understood to include the action of the higher part of our humanity in controlling or modifying the lower and grosser part. This does not imply any acceptance of the ascetic theory of self-mortification, it is a part of the scientific doctrine of self-development, since we must recognize as one element in natural self-development the moving upward of which Mr. Tennyson speaks: —

> "Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die."

The ethics of self-development rightly interpreted must, under the influence of science, for ever replace the false ethics of self-

mortification. A sane and vigorous human body, rich in the qualities which attract, and strongly feeling the attractions of the earth, and of human creatures upon the earth, will seem more sacred to us than the most attenuated limbs of the martyrs of early Christian art. Among our human instincts, passions, affections, — the æsthetic sensibilities, the intellect, the conscience, the religious emotions, an order and hierarchy are indeed indispensable; but not one citizen in our little state of man shall be disfranchised or dishonoured. So shall men see (when fatherhood and motherhood have been duly considered beforehand) youth ardent, aspiring, joyous, free; manhood, powerful, hardy, patient, vigilant, courageous; and an old age of majesty and beauty. Nor will death, which has been in our globe ever since life was in it, appear the seal of human shame and sin, but the completion of a fulfilled course, the rest at the goal, perhaps the starting-point of a new career.[1]

All this has reference, however, to the ideal of the individual as pointed to by science, but science declares further and declares with ever-increasing emphasis, that duty is social. The law, under which we live, does not consist, as regards our duties to our neighbour, merely or chiefly of negations. "Thou shalt not," since the great Teacher of the mount interpreted the law, has given place to "Thou shalt" — shalt actively strengthen, sustain, co-operate. The ideal of co-operation has been well defined as "The voluntary, conscious participation of each intelligent, separate element of society in preparing, maintaining, and increasing the general well-being, material, intellectual, and emotional." Self-surrender is therefore at times sternly enjoined, and if the egoistic desires are brought into conflict with social duties, the individual life and joy within us, at whatever cost of personal suffering, must be sacrificed to

[1] What has been said above is said in better words in many passages of Whitman's writings. See *Democratic Vistas; Two Rivulets.* To spiritualize the democracy by asserting the power of a religion in harmony with modern science, has been the chief tendency of Whitman's later writings.

the just claims of our fellows. But what has the idea of duty to do with literature — what especially has it to do with the literature of the imagination? Little indeed, if such literature be no more than a supply to the senses of delicate colours and perfumes; much, if such literature address itself, as all great literature does, to the total nature of man. And what in effect is this statement, justified by science, of the nature of duty, but a rendering into abstract formulæ of the throbbings of the heart which lives at the centre of such creations as "Romola," "Armgart," and "Middlemarch"?

It is not possible here to consider how the modification by science of our conception, not of the world only, nor of man, but of the Supreme Power, must express itself, if it have not already expressed itself, in literature. That Power is no remote or capricious ruler; absolutely inscrutable, the Father of our spirits is yet manifested in the totality of things, and most highly manifested to such beings as ourselves in the divinest representatives of our race. Recognizing all our notions of this inscrutable Power as but symbolic, we may for purposes of edification accept an anthropomorphic conception, and yield to all that, in sincerity, and imposing no delusion upon ourselves, such an anthropomorphic conception may suggest, provided always that we keep it, in accordance with its purpose of edification, at the topmost level upon which our moral and spiritual nature can sustain an ideal, and bear in mind that it has no absolute validity. Nor will it be without an enlarging and liberating power with our spirit from time to time, when circumstances make it natural to do so, if we part with, dismiss or abolish the symbolic conception suggested by man, in favour of one which the life and beauty of this earth of ours, or of the sublime cosmos of which it is a member, may suggest to the devout imagination. Thus by all that can be seen, and known, and loved, the religious spirit will be fed, and around and beyond what is knowable will abide an encircling mystery, by virtue

of which the universe becomes something more than a workshop, a gymnasium or a banquet-chamber, by virtue of which it becomes even an oracle and a shrine. Out of that darkness has proceeded our light; and in proportion as our hearts are filled with that light, shall we possess wisdom and courage to draw high auguries of hope and fear from the mystery which lies around our life, and to wait resolvedly for whatever new shining of the day-spring, or whatever calm silence of night, the future years may yield. It is possible already to perceive in literature the influence of such religious conceptions as have been here suggested.

THE PROVINCES OF THE SEVERAL ARTS

John Addington Symonds

(1840–1893)

[Like his friend Stevenson, whom physically and mentally he somewhat resembled, John Addington Symonds, biographer, translator, critic, essayist, and poet fought out his battle with ill-health and wrote his many books far removed from that urban and intellectual society in which he was so well fitted to shine. His brilliancy as a talker is recorded by his brother-exile in the Swiss Highlands, Stevenson, who characterizes him as "opalstein" — a word suggestive both of his irridescence and his melancholy — and who pictures his friend "not truly reconciled either with life or with himself, singing, in a moonlight serenading manner, the praises of the earth and the arts, [of] flowers and jewels, [of] wine and music." That he had an unexpected capacity for solid research is evidenced by his *magnum opus* of six volumes on the *Renaissance in Italy* (1875–1886), — however much authorities may differ about its thoroughness; and by his *Predecessors of Shakespeare* (1884), — concerning the force and originality of which authorities are agreed. And that he possessed undoubted critical ability is shown by his excellent biographies of Shelley, Michelangelo, and Sir Philip Sidney. The abiding impression of Symonds, however, is not that of the thoroughness, or the balance, or the profundity, but rather of the opalescent suggestiveness of his passionately inquisitive mind. He was a true child of that Renaissance which was the theme of his prize essay at Oxford and the absorbing study of his maturity.

The Provinces of the Several Arts (1890), is one of the *Essays Speculative and Suggestive* in which Symonds just before the end of his life precipitated some of that wisdom which had served as a basis for his critical judgment in many previous works. Though certain æstheticians have found little new in this particular essay, no one can escape the charm and suggestiveness with which this lover of all the arts has sung their praises.]

I

'Art,' said Goethe, 'is but form-giving.' We might vary this definition, and say, 'Art is a method of expression or presentation.' Then comes the question: If art gives form, if it is a method of expression or presentation, to what does it give form, what does it express or present? The answer certainly must be: Art gives form to human consciousness; expresses or presents the feeling or the thought of man. Whatever else art may do by the way, in the communication of innocent pleasures, in the adornment of life and the softening of manners, in the creation of beautiful shapes and sounds, this, at all events, is its prime function.

While investing thought and sentiment, the spiritual subject-matter of all art, with form, or finding for it proper modes of presentation, each of the arts employs a special medium, obeying the laws of beauty proper to that medium. The vehicles of the arts, roughly speaking, are solid substances (like ivory, stone, wood, metal), pigments, sounds, and words. The masterly handling of these vehicles and the realization of their characteristic types of beauty have come to be regarded as the craftsman's paramount concern. And in a certain sense this is a right conclusion; for dexterity in the manipulation of the chosen vehicle and power to create a beautiful object, distinguish the successful artist from the man who may have had like thoughts and feelings. This dexterity, this power, are the properties of the artist, *quâ* artist. Yet we must not forget that the form created by the artist for the expression of a thought or feeling is not the final end of art itself. That form, after all, is but the mode of presentation through which the spiritual content manifests itself. Beauty, in like manner, is not the final end of art, but is the indispensable condition under which the artistic manifestation of the spiritual content must be made. It is the business of art to create an ideal world,

in which perception, emotion, understanding, action, all elements of human life sublimed by thought, shall reappear in concrete forms as beauty. This being so, the logical criticism of art demands that we should not only estimate the technical skill of an artist and his faculty for presenting beauty to the æsthetic sense, but that we should also ask ourselves what portion of the human spirit he has chosen to invest with form, and how he has conceived his subject. It is not necessary that the ideas embodied in a work of art should be the artist's own. They may be common to the race and age: as, for instance, the conception of sovereign deity expressed in the Olympian Zeus of Pheidias, or the conception of divine maternity expressed in Raphael's Madonna di SanSisto. Still the personality of the artist, his own intellectual and moral nature, his peculiar way of thinking and feeling, his individual attitude toward the material given to him in ideas of human consciousness, will modify his choice of subject and of form, and will determine his specific type of beauty. To take an example: supposing that an idea, common to his race and age, is given to the artist for treatment; this will be the final end of the work of art which he produces. But his personal qualities and technical performance determine the degree of success or failure to which he attains in seizing that idea and in presenting it with beauty. Signorelli fails where Perugino excels, in giving adequate and lovely form to the religious sentiment. Michel Angelo is sure of the sublime, and Raphael of the beautiful.

Art is thus the expression of the human spirit by the artist to his fellow-men. The subject-matter of the arts is commensurate with what man thinks and feels and does. It is as deep as religion, as wide as life. But what distinguishes art from religion or from life is, that this subject-matter must assume beautiful form, and must be presented directly or indirectly to the senses. Art is not the school or the cathedral, but the playground, the paradise of humanity. It does not teach, it does

not preach. Nothing abstract enters into art's domain. Truth and goodness are transmuted into beauty there, just as in science beauty and goodness assume the shape of truth, and in religion truth and beauty become goodness. The rigid definitions, the unmistakable laws of science, are not to be found in art. Whatever art has touched acquires a concrete sensuous embodiment, and thus ideas presented to the mind in art have lost a portion of their pure thought-essence. It is on this account that the religious conceptions of the Greeks were so admirably fitted for the art of sculpture, and certain portions of the mediæval Christian mythology lent themselves so well to painting. For the same reason the metaphysics of ecclesiastical dogma defy the artist's plastic faculty. Art, in a word, is a middle term between reason and the senses. Its secondary aim, after the prime end of manifesting the human spirit in beautiful form has been accomplished, is to give tranquil and innocent enjoyment.

II

From what has gone before, it will be seen that no human being can make or mould a beautiful form without incorporating in that form some portion of the human mind, however crude, however elementary. In other words, there is no work of art without a theme, without a motive, without a subject. The presentation of that theme, that motive, that subject is the final end of art. The art is good or bad according as the subject has been well or ill presented, consistently with the laws of beauty special to the art itself. Thus we obtain two standards for æsthetic criticism. We judge a statue, for example, both by the sculptor's intellectual grasp upon his subject, and also by his technical skill and sense of beauty. In a picture of the Last Judgment by Fra Angelico we say that the bliss of the righteous has been more successfully treated than the torments of the wicked, because the former has been better understood, although the painter's skill in each is equal.

In the Perseus of Cellini we admire the sculptor's spirit, finish of execution, and originality of design, while we deplore that want of sympathy with the heroic character which makes his type of physical beauty slightly vulgar and his facial expression vacuous.

If the phrase 'Art for art's sake' has any meaning, this meaning is simply that the artist, having chosen a theme, thinks exclusively in working at it of technical dexterity or the quality of beauty. There are many inducements for the artist thus to narrow his function, and for the critic to assist him by applying the canons of a soulless connoisseurship to his work; for the conception of the subject is but the starting-point in art-production, and the artist's difficulties and triumphs as a craftsman lie in the region of technicalities. He knows, moreover, that however deep or noble his idea may be, his work of art will be worthless if it fail in skill or be devoid of beauty. What converts a thought into a statue or a picture, is the form found for it; and so the form itself seems all-important. The artist, therefore, too easily imagines that he may neglect his theme; that a fine piece of coloring, a well-balanced composition, or, as Cellini put it, '*un bel corpo ignudo*,' is enough. And this is especially easy in an age which reflects much upon the arts, and pursues them with enthusiasm, while its deeper thoughts and sentiments are not of the kind which translate themselves readily into artistic form. But, after all, a fine piece of coloring, a well-balanced composition, a sonorous stanza, a learned essay in counterpoint, are not enough. They are all excellent good things, yielding delight to the artistic sense and instruction to the student. Yet when we think of the really great statues, pictures, poems, music of the world, we find that these are really great because of something more — and that more is their theme, their presentation of a noble portion of the human soul. Artists and art students may be satisfied with perfect specimens of a craftsman's skill, independent of his

theme; but the mass of men will not be satisfied; and it is as wrong to suppose that art exists for artists and art-students, as to talk of art for art's sake. Art exists for humanity. Art transmutes thought and feeling into terms of beautiful form. Art is great and lasting in proportion as it appeals to the human consciousness at large, presenting to it portions of itself in adequate and lovely form.

III

It was necessary in the first place firmly to apprehend the truth that the final end of all art is the presentation of a spiritual content; it is necessary in the next place to remove confusions by considering the special circumstances of the several arts.

Each art has its own vehicle of expression. What it can present and how it can present it, depends upon the nature of this vehicle. Thus, though architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, meet upon the common ground of spiritualised experience — though the works of art produced by the architect, sculptor, painter, musician, poet, emanate from the spiritual nature of the race, are coloured by the spiritual nature of the men who make them, and express what is spiritual in humanity under concrete forms invented for them by the artist — yet it is certain that all of these arts do not deal exactly with the same portions of this common material in the same way or with the same results. Each has its own department. Each exhibits qualities of strength and weakness special to itself. To define these several departments, to explain the relation of these several vehicles of presentation to the common subject-matter, is the next step in criticism.

IV

Of the fine arts, architecture alone subserves utility. We build for use. But the geometrical proportions which the architect observes, contain the element of beauty and powerfully influence the soul. Into the language of arch and aisle and colonnade,

of cupola and façade and pediment, of spire and vault, the architect translates emotion, vague perhaps but deep, mute but unmistakable.

When we say that a building is sublime or graceful, frivolous or stern, we mean that sublimity or grace, frivolity or sternness, is inherent in it. The emotions connected with these qualities are inspired in us when we contemplate it, and are presented to us by its form. Whether the architect deliberately aimed at the sublime or graceful — whether the dignified serenity of the Athenian genius sought to express itself in the Parthenon, and the mysticism of mediæval Christianity in the gloom of Chartres Cathedral — whether it was Renaissance paganism which gave its mundane pomp and glory to S. Peter's, and the refined selfishness of royalty its specious splendour to the palace of Versailles — need not be curiously questioned. The fact that we are impelled to raise these points, that architecture more almost than any other art connects itself indissolubly with the life, the character, the moral being of a nation and an epoch, proves that we are justified in bringing it beneath our general definition of the arts. In a great measure because it subserves utility, and is therefore dependent upon the necessities of life, does architecture present to us through form the human spirit. Comparing the palace built by Giulio Romano for the Dukes of Mantua with the contemporary castle of a German prince, we can not fail at once to comprehend the difference of spiritual conditions, as these displayed themselves in daily life, which then separated Italy from the Teutonic nations. But this is not all. Spiritual quality in the architect himself finds clear expression in his work. Coldness combined with violence marks Brunelleschi's churches; a certain suavity and well-bred taste the work of Bramante; while Michel Angelo exhibits wayward energy in his Library of S. Lorenzo, and Amadeo self-abandonment to fancy in his Lombard chapels. I have chosen examples from one nation and one epoch in order

that the point I seek to make, the demonstration of a spiritual quality in buildings, may be fairly stated.

V

Sculpture and painting distinguish themselves from the other fine arts by the imitation of concrete existences in nature. They copy the bodies of men and animals, the aspects of the world around us, and the handiwork of mankind. Yet, in so far as they are rightly arts, they do not make imitation an object in itself. The grapes of Zeuxis at which birds pecked, the painted dog at which a cat's hair bristles — if such grapes or such a dog were ever put upon canvas — are but evidences of the artist's skill, not of his faculty as artist. These two plastic, or, as I prefer to call them, figurative arts, use their imitation of the external world for the expression, the presentation of internal, spiritual things. The human form is for them the outward symbol of the inner human spirit, and their power of presenting spirit is limited by the means at their disposal.

Sculpture employs stone, wood, clay, the precious metals to model forms, detached and independent, or raised upon a flat surface in relief. Its domain is the whole range of human character and consciousness, in so far as these can be indicated by fixed facial expression, by physical type, and by attitude. If we dwell for an instant on the greatest historical epoch of sculpture, we shall understand the domain of this art in its range and limitation. At a certain point of Greek development the Hellenic Pantheon began to be translated by the sculptors into statues: and when the genius of the Greeks expired in Rome, the cycle of their psychological conceptions had been exhaustively presented through this medium. During that long period of time, the most delicate gradations of human personality, divinised, idealised, were submitted to the contemplation of the consciousness which gave them being, in appropriate types. Strength and swiftness, massive force and airy lightness, contem-

plative repose, and active energy, voluptuous softness and refined grace, intellectual sublimity and lascivious seductiveness — the whole rhythm of qualities which can be typified by bodily form — were analysed, selected, combined in various degrees, to incarnate the religious conceptions of Zeus, Aphrodite, Herakles, Dionysus, Pallas, Fauns and Satyrs, Nymphs of woods and waves, Tritons, the genius of Death, heroes and hunters, lawgivers and poets, presiding deities of minor functions, man's lustful appetites and sensual needs. All that men think, or do, or are, or wish for, or imagine in this world, had found exact corporeal equivalents. Not physiognomy alone, but all the portions of the body upon which the habits of the animating soul are wont to stamp themselves, were studied and employed as symbolism. Uranian Aphrodite was distinguished from her Pandemic sister by chastened, lust-repelling loveliness. The muscles of Herakles were more ponderous than the tense sinews of Achilles. The Hermes of the palæstra bore a torso of majestic depth; the Hermes who carried messages from heaven had limbs alert for movement. The brows of Zeus inspired awe; the breasts of Dionysus breathed delight.

A race accustomed, as the Greeks were, to read this symbolism, accustomed, as the Greeks were, to note the individuality of naked form, had no difficulty in interpreting the language of sculpture. Nor is there even now much difficulty in the task. Our surest guide to the subject of a bas-relief or statue is study of the physical type considered as symbolical of spiritual quality. From the fragment of a torso the true critic can say whether it belongs to the athletic or the erotic species. A limb of Bacchus differs from a limb of Poseidon. The whole psychological conception of Aphrodite Pandemos enters into every muscle, every joint, no less than into her physiognomy, her hair, her attitude.

There is, however, a limit to the domain of sculpture. This art deals most successfully with personified generalities. It is also strong in the presentation of incarnate character. But

when it attempts to tell a story, we often seek in vain its meaning. Battles of Amazons or Centaurs upon bas-reliefs, indeed, are unmistakable. The subject is indicated here by some external sign. The group Laocoon appeals at once to a reader of Virgil, and the divine vengeance of Leto's children upon Niobe is manifest in the Uffizzi marbles. But who are the several heroes of the Æginetan pediment, and what was the subject of the Pheidian statues on the Parthenon? Do the three graceful figures of a bas-relief which exists at Naples and in the Villa Albani, represent Orpheus, Hermes, and Eurydice, or Antiope and her two sons? Was the winged and sworded genius upon the Ephesus column meant for a genius of Death or a genius of Love?

This dimness of significance indicates the limitations of sculpture, and incline some of those who feel its charm to assert that the sculptor seeks to convey no intellectual meaning, that he is satisfied with the creation of beautiful form. There is an element of good sense in this revolt against the faith which holds that art is nothing but a mode of spiritual presentation. Truly the artist aims at producing beauty, is satisfied if he conveys delight. But it is impossible to escape from the certainty that, while he is creating forms of beauty, he means something, feels something; and that something, that theme for which he finds the form, is part of the world's spiritual heritage. Only the crudest works of figurative art, capricci and arabesques, have no intellectual content; and even these are good in so far as they convey the playfulness of fancy.

VI

Painting employs colours upon surfaces — walls, panels, canvas. What has been said about sculpture will apply in a great measure to this art. The human form, the world around us, the works of man's hands, are represented in painting, not for their own sake merely, but with view of bringing thought,

feeling, action, home to the consciousness of the spectator from the artist's consciousness on which they have been impressed. Painting can tell a story better than sculpture, can represent more complicated feelings, can suggest thoughts of a subtler intricacy. Through colour, it can play, like music, directly on powerful but vague emotion. It is deficient in the fulness and roundness of concrete reality. A statue stands before us, the soul incarnate in palpable form, fixed and frozen for eternity. The picture is a reflection cast upon a magic glass; not less permanent, but reduced to a shadow of palpable reality. To follow these distinctions farther would be alien from the present purpose. It is enough to repeat that, within their several spheres, according to their several strengths and weaknesses, both sculpture and painting present the spirit to us only as the spirit shows itself immersed in things of sense. The light of a lamp enclosed within an alabaster vase is still lamplight, though shorn of lustre and toned to coloured softness. Even thus the spirit, immersed in things of sense presented to us by the figurative arts, is still spirit, though diminished in its intellectual clearness and invested with hues not its own. To fashion that alabaster form of art with utmost skill, to make it beautiful, to render it transparent, is the artist's function. But he will have failed of the highest if the light within burns dim, or if he gives the world a lamp in which no spiritual flame is lighted.

VII

Music transports us to a different region. Like architecture, it imitates nothing. It uses pure sound, and sound of the most wholly artificial kind — so artificial that the musical sounds of one race are unmusical, and therefore unintelligible to another. Like architecture, music relies upon mathematical proportions. Unlike architecture, music serves no utility. It is the purest art of pleasure — the truest paradise and playground of the spirit. It has less power than painting, even less power than

sculpture, to tell a story or to communicate an idea. For we must remember that when music is married to words, the words, and not the music, reach our thinking faculty. And yet, in spite of all this, music presents man's spirit to itself through form. The domain of the spirit over which music reigns, is emotion — not defined emotion, not feeling even so generally defined as jealousy or anger — but those broad bases of man's being out of which emotions spring, defining themselves through action into this or that set type of feeling. Architecture, we have noticed, is so connected with specific modes of human existence, that from its main examples we can reconstruct the life of men who used it. Sculpture and painting, by limiting their presentation to the imitation of external things, have all the help which experience and association render. The mere artificiality of music's vehicle separates it from life and makes its message untranslatable. Nevertheless, this very disability under which it labors is the secret of its extraordinary potency.

To expect clear definition from music — the definition which belongs to poetry — would be absurd. The sphere of music is in sensuous perception; the sphere of poetry is in intelligence. Music, dealing with pure sound, must always be vaguer in significance than poetry, which deals with words. Nevertheless its effect upon the sentient subject may be more intense and penetrating for this very reason. We cannot fail to understand what words are intended to convey; we may very easily interpret in a hundred different ways the message of sound. But this is not because words are wider in their reach and more alive; rather because they are more limited, more stereotyped, more dead. They symbolise something precise and unmistakable; but this precision is itself attenuation of the something symbolised. The exact value of the counter is better understood when it is a word than when it is a chord, because all that a word conveys has already become a thought, while all that musical sounds convey remains within the region of emotion which

has not been intellectualised.[1] Poetry touches emotion through the thinking faculty. If music reaches the thinking faculty at all, it is through fibers of emotion. But emotion, when it has become thought, has already lost a portion of its force, and has taken to itself a something alien to its nature. Therefore the message of music can never rightly be translated into words. It is the very largeness and vividness of the sphere of simple feeling which makes its symbolical counterpart in sound so seeming vague. But in spite of this incontestable defect of seeming vagueness, an emotion expressed by music is nearer to our sentient self if we have ears to take it in, than the same emotion limited by language. It is intenser, it is more immediate, as compensation for being less intelligible, less unmistakable in meaning. It is an infinite, an indistinct, where each consciousness defines and sets a limitary form.

Nothing intervenes between the musical work of art and the fibres of the sentient being it immediately thrills. We do not seek to say what music means. We feel the music. And if a man should pretend that the music has not passed beyond his ears, has communicated nothing but a musical delight, he simply tells us that he has not felt music. The ancients on this point were wiser than some moderns when, without pretending to assign an intellectual significance to music, they held it for an axiom that one type of music bred one type of character, another type another. A change in the music of a state, wrote Plato, will be followed by changes in its constitution. It is of the utmost importance, said Aristotle, to provide in education for the use of the ennobling and the fortifying moods. These philosophers knew that music creates a spiritual world, in which the spirit cannot live and move without contracting habits of emotion. In this vagueness of significance but intensity of feeling lies the magic of music. A melody occurs to the composer, which he certainly connects with no act of the reason, which

[1] 'Thought,' said Novalis somewhere, 'is only a pale, desiccated emotion.'

he is probably unconscious of connecting with any movement of his feeling, but which nevertheless is the form in sound of an emotional mood. When he reflects upon the melody secreted thus impromptu, he is aware, as we learn from his own lips, that this work has correspondence with emotion. Beethoven calls one symphony Heroic, another Pastoral; of the opening of another he says, 'Fate knocks at the door.' Mozart sets comic words to the mass-music of a friend, in order to make his sense of its inaptitude for religious sentiment. All composers use phrases like Maestoso, Pomposo, Allegro, Lagrimoso, Con Fuoco, to express the general complexion of the mood their music ought to represent.

VIII

Before passing to poetry, it may be well to turn aside and consider two subordinate arts, which deserve a place in any system of æsthetics. These are dancing and acting. Dancing uses the living human form, and presents feeling or action, the passions and the deeds of men, in artificially educated movements of the body. The element of beauty it possesses, independently of the beauty of the dancer, is rhythm. Acting or the art of mimicry presents the same subject-matter, no longer under the conditions of fixed rhythm, but as an ideal reproduction of reality. The actor is what he represents, and the element of beauty in his art is perfection of realisation. It is his duty as an artist to show us Orestes or Othello, not perhaps exactly as Othello and Orestes were, but as the essence of their tragedies, ideally incorporate in action, ought to be. The actor can do this in dumb show. Some of the greatest actors of the ancient world were mimes. But he usually interprets a poet's thought, and attempts to present an artistic conception in a secondary form of art, which has for its advantage his own personality in play.

IX

The last of the fine arts is literature; or, in the narrower sphere of which it will be well to speak here only, is poetry. Poetry employs words in fixed rhythms, which we call metres. Only a small portion of its effect is derived from the beauty of its sound. It appeals to the sense of hearing far less immediately than music does. It makes no appeal to the eyesight, and takes no help from the beauty of colour. It produces no palpable, tangible object. But language being the storehouse of all human experience, language being the medium whereby spirit communicates with spirit in affairs of life, the vehicle which transmits to us the thoughts and feelings of the past, and on which we rely for continuing our present to the future, it follows that, of all the arts, poetry soars highest, flies widest, and is most at home in the region of the spirit. What poetry lacks of sensuous fulness, it more than balances by intellectual intensity. Its significance is unmistakable, because it employs the very material men use in their exchange of thoughts and correspondence of emotions. To the bounds of its empire there is no end. It embraces in its own more abstract being all the arts. By words it does the work in turn of architecture, sculpture, painting, music. It is the metaphysic of the fine arts. Philosophy finds place in poetry; and life itself, refined to its last utterance, hangs trembling on this thread which joins our earth to heaven, this bridge between experience and the realms where unattainable and imperceptible will have no meaning.

If we are right in defining art as the manifestation of the human spirit to man by man in beautiful form, poetry, more incontestably than any other art, fulfills this definition and enables us to gauge its accuracy. For words are the spirit, manifested to itself in symbols with no sensual alloy. Poetry is therefore the presentation, through words, of life and all that life implies. Perception, emotion, thought, action, find in

descriptive, lyrical, reflective, dramatic, and epical poetry their immediate apocalypse. In poetry we are no longer puzzled with problems as to whether art has or has not of necessity a spiritual content. There cannot be any poetry whatsoever without a spiritual meaning of some sort; good or bad, moral, immoral, or non-moral, obscure or lucid, noble or ignoble, slight or weighty — such distinctions do not signify. In poetry we are not met by questions whether the poet intended to convey a meaning when he made it. Quite meaningless poetry (as some critics would fain find melody quite meaningless, or a statue meaningless, or a Venetian picture meaningless) is a contradiction in terms. In poetry, life, or a portion of life, lives again, resuscitated and presented to our mental faculty through art. The best poetry is that which reproduces the most of life, or its intensest moments. Therefore the extensive species of the drama and the epic, the intensive species of the lyric, have been ever held in highest esteem. Only a paradoxical critic maintains the thesis that poetry is excellent in so far as it assimilates the vagueness of music, or estimates a poet by his power of translating sense upon the border-land of nonsense into melodious words. Where poetry falls short in the comparison with other arts, is in the quality of form giving, in the quality of sensuous concreteness. Poetry can only present forms to the mental eye and to the intellectual sense, stimulate the physical senses by indirect suggestion. Therefore dramatic poetry, the most complicated kind of poetry, relies upon the actor; and lyrical poetry, the intensest kind of poetry, seeks the aid of music. But these comparative deficiencies are overbalanced, for all the highest purposes of art, by the width and depth, the intelligibility and power, the flexibility and multitudinous associations of language. The other arts are limited in what they utter. There is nothing which has entered into the life of man which poetry cannot express. Poetry says everything in man's own language to the mind. The other

arts appeal imperatively, each in its own region, to man's senses; and the mind receives art's message by the help of symbols from the world of sense. Poetry lacks this immediate appeal to sense. But the elixir which it offers to the mind, its quintessence extracted from all things of sense, reacts through intellectual perception upon all the faculties that make men what they are.

X

I used a metaphor in one of the foregoing paragraphs to indicate the presence of the vital spirit, the essential element of thought or feeling, in the work of act. I said it radiated through the form, as lamplight through an alabaster vase. Now the skill of the artist is displayed in modelling that vase, in giving it shape, rich and rare, and fashioning its curves with subtlest workmanship. In so far as he is a craftsman, the artist's pains must be bestowed upon this precious vessel of the animating theme. In so far as he has power over beauty, he must exert it in this plastic act. It is here that he displays dexterity; here that he creates; here that he separates himself from other men who think and feel. The poet, more perhaps than any other artist, needs to keep this steadily in view; for words being our daily vehicle of utterance, it may well chance that the alabaster vase of language should be hastily or trivially modelled. This is the true reason why 'neither gods nor men nor the columns either suffer mediocrity in singers.' Upon the poet it is specially incumbent to see that he has something rare to say and some rich mode of saying it. The figurative arts need hardly be so cautioned. They run their risk in quite a different direction. For sculptor and for painter, the danger is lest he should think that alabaster vase his final task. He may too easily be satisfied with moulding a beautiful but empty form.

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